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WEST SIDE STUDIES

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FORMERLY ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR NEW YORK SCHOOL OF PHILANTHROPY, MEMBER OF INDUSTRIAL BOARD NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

BOYHOOD AND LAWLESSNESS

—

THE NEGLECTED GIRL

By RUTH S. TRUE

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PREFACE TO WEST SIDE STUDIES

IN the summer of 1912 the field work was completed for the West Side studies published in these volumes. They are part of a wider survey of the neighborhood which it was proposed to make under the Bureau of Social Research of the New York School of Philanthropy with funds supplied by the Russell Sage Foundation. Dr. Samuel McCune Lindsay, director of the School, and I were in charge of the Bureau and together planned the scope and nature of the inquiry. To his inspiriting influence was due in large measure the enthusiasm and harmonious work of our staff.

The investigators in the Bureau were men and women who had been awarded fellowships by the School of Philanthropy. There were junior fellowships, given for one year only, and intended to provide training in social research for students without much previous experience, who were required to give part of their time to class work and special reading. There were also senior fellowships given to more advanced students who devoted full time to investigation. After two years' work it was felt that to carry out the original plan satisfactorily would require the employment of a permanent staff of investigators who were well trained and equipped. The School, therefore, decided not to carry the survey further and reorganized the Bureau on a different basis.

This brief account of the Bureau is needed to explain the special topics dealt with in these volumes. The personal qualifications of the investigators as well as the available opportunities for investigation necessarily determined the choice of subjects.

A word must be said, too, as to the selection of this particular West Side district of New York City. These 80 blocks which border upon the Hudson River, between Thirty-fourth and Fifty-fourth Streets, contrast sharply with almost all other tenement neighborhoods of the city. They have as nearly homogeneous and stable a population as can be found in any part of New York. The original stock was Irish and German. In each generation the bolder spirits moved away to more prosperous parts of the city. This left behind the less ambitious and in many cases the wrecks of the population. Hence in this "backset" from the main current of the city's life may be seen some of the most acute social problems of modern urban life—not the readjustment and amalgamation of sturdy immigrant groups, but the discouragement and deterioration of an indigenous American community.

The quarter which we studied is strangely detached from the rest of the city. Only occasionally an outbreak of lawlessness brings it to public notice. Its old reputation for violence and crime dates back many generations and persists to the present day. So true is this that we considered it essential at the beginning of our undertaking to ascertain the main facts of the district's development. To Otho G. Cartwright was assigned the task of collecting this material. He did not make an exhaustive inquiry, but obtained from reliable sources sufficient information to give the his-

torical background of life in the district today. His work serves as a general introduction to the more intensive studies which follow.

The study of juvenile delinquency, Boyhood and Lawlessness, shows clearly the need of special intimate knowledge of social phenomena if their underlying causes are to be understood. It describes the inadequacies of the present system: the innumerable arrests for petty offenses or for playing in the streets, and the failure of the police to bring the ringleaders into court. All this seems so unreasonable to the neighborhood and has so often aroused its antagonism that the influence of the Children's Court is seriously undermined. In fact, the fathers and mothers of its charges look upon it only as a hostile authority in league with the police, while its real purpose is entirely hidden from them. The evidence is clear, too, that both parents and community have failed to understand and provide for the most elementary physical needs of the boys.

The same tragic lack of opportunity and care characterizes the lives of the girls. Ruth S. True's portrayal of these lives in The Neglected Girl rests upon close personal acquaintance with a special group of girls who, though they were not brought up on charges in the Children's Court, yet were without question in grave need of probationary care.

In neither of these two studies was it possible to suggest adequate remedies for the evils described. It is true that steps have already been taken by the Children's Court to make its probation staff more effective. But the more fundamental need for modification of the conditions of the child's life and environ-

ment has still to be pondered. Clearly it is not the child alone who needs reformation.

Similarly, Katharine Anthony's report, Mothers Who Must Earn, reveals much more than isolated cases of hardship and suffering due to accident or death. She has studied the social and economic causes which compel the mother of a family to become a wage-earner, and the consequences of such employment for her home and family. The occupations where her services are in demand were carefully examined. The underpayment of many of the husbands, which drives their already overburdened wives into wage-earning, is perhaps the most significant fact disclosed. To relieve such severe economic pressure there is certainly need of more radical and far-reaching readjustments than can be effected by any one remedial measure. Relief giving is at best only a temporary stop-gap. This is rather a labor problem of the utmost gravity, affecting whole classes of underpaid laborers.

Indeed, if there is any one truth which emerges from these studies, it is the futility of dealing with social maladjustments as single isolated problems. They are all closely interrelated, and the first step in getting order out of our complexities must be knowledge of what exists. To such knowledge these studies aim to make a contribution. They are not intended to prove preconceived ideas nor to test the efficacy of any special remedies. They aim to describe with sympathy and insight some of the real needs of a neglected quarter of our city—"to hold, as it were, the mirror up to nature."

The various investigators who took part in the inquiry are given herewith: Edward M. Barrows, Clin-

ton S. Childs, Eleanor H. Adler, Beatrice Sheets, and Ruth S. True contributed to the study of the West Side boy, here published under the title Boyhood and Lawlessness. Thomas D. Eliot, a junior fellow, also assisted. Associated with Ruth S. True in the study of the neglected girl, were Ann Campion and Dorothy Kirchwey. All three shared the responsibility of conducting the Tenth Avenue club for the observation of the girls described in their report. The volume Mothers Who Must Earn is the result of work done by Katharine Anthony, who was assisted in her field work by Ruth S. Waldo, a junior fellow.*

In the fall of 1912 practically the whole staff at that time employed devoted two months' time to inspection of the industrial establishments of the district, under authority of the New York State Factory Investigating Commission. The results were published as Appendix V, to Volume I, of the Commission's P eliminary Report, 1912.

Thanks are due to many persons who gave unstintedly of their time to the various investigators. Our indebtedness is especially great to the staff of the Clinton District office of the Charity Organization Society, who brought us in touch with many families in their care, and through their varied experience helped us in interpreting many aspects of neighborhood life. Among

* Mention should also be made of other fellows of the Bureau whose work in connection with the West Side Survey is not included in these publications. They were Elizabeth B. Butler, senior fellow; Lawrence K. Frank, Robert C. Sanger, Garret P. Wyckoff, Howard Nudd, Marie S. Orenstein, and Frances Perkins, all junior fellows. The last three published the results of their investigations in magazine articles.

other agencies, Hartley House was particularly generous in making us acquainted with its Italian neighbors and in giving us the opportunity to visit them in their homes. The teachers of various local schools should also be mentioned with appreciation for the help they gave us in many ways.

PAULINE GOLDMARK.

JUST BOYS!
Why not make them a community asset?

RUSSELL SAGE
FOUNDATION

—

BOYHOOD AND LAWLESSNESS

WEST SIDE STUDIES

NEW YORK
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INTRODUCTION

WHEN the Bureau of Social Research began, early in 1909, an investigation of the Middle West Side, it was soon realized that of all the problems presented by the district, none was more urgent and baffling, none more fundamental, than that of the boy and his gang. His anti-social activities have forced him upon public attention as an obstruction to law and business and a menace to order and safety. Because of this lawlessness and because of New York's backwardness in formulating wise preventive measures to meet it, a special study of the West Side boy was begun.

In order to gain an intimate knowledge of neighborhood conditions which affect the boy, two men workers, Edward M. Barrows and Clinton S. Childs, went to live in the district, the former remaining for nearly two years. During their residence they came in close touch with several gangs and clubs of boys. Their experiences, while they yielded some of the most vital and significant material of our study, did not lend themselves to statistical treatment; they were not recorded in the form of family and individual histories, but as a running day-by-day diary, which formed the basis of the chapters dealing with the activities and the environment of the boys.

Since the West Side boy, either through personal contact or through association with gang leaders, is inseparable from the Children's Court, attention was

naturally drawn to the extent and the result of his relation to this institution. For this reason the Bureau made a special study of 294 boys * selected from the district with particular reference to their delinquency and their court records.†

Of these boys 28 were under twelve years, 71 more were fourteen, and 102 more were under sixteen. In view of these significant facts it became necessary not only to examine the environment of the West Side boy, but also to estimate the influence of the Children's Court and other institutions upon him when toughness, truancy, gambling, or other temptations had carried him over the brink into real delinquency. That society should feel itself compelled to resort continually to the arrest and trial of children is in itself a confession of defeat. But when even these resources fail, it becomes imperative to analyze all the factors in the situation; to set the destructive and the constructive elements over against each other, and to determine the chances which the boy and the various public and private agencies organized to regenerate him have of understanding one another.

To many the study may serve to show at their doors a world undreamed of; a world in which, through causes which are even now removable, youth is denied the universal rights of life, liberty, and happiness. To the

* The names of the 294 boys studied were obtained from the following sources: 1909 court list, 202; Big Brother Movement, 43; special club studied, 10; Charity Organization Society, 8; additional children in families studied, 20; known through investigators on other topics, 6; known through other children, 2; through church, school, settlement, 1 each.

† See Chapter VI, The Boy and the Court, pp. 79 ff.

court it may be of use in throwing light into dark places and in showing where old paths should be abandoned, as well as in offering suggestions at a critical period in its history.

And, indeed, every suggestion which will tend to lessen the troubles of the Middle West Side is peculiarly needed. The whole community—from molested property owners to the most disinterested social workers—are agreed that the worst elements rule the streets and that neither police nor court authority succeed in enforcing decency and order. And the center of the problem is the boy, for in him West Side lawlessness finds its most perennial and permanent expression.

The aim of this study, therefore, is to trace the principal influences which have formed the West Side boy; to consider some of the means which have heretofore been employed to counteract these influences; and to picture him as he is, exemplifying the results of circumstances for which not he but the entire community is responsible.

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CHAPTER I

HIS BACKGROUND

THE influence of environment on character is now so fully recognized that no study of juvenile offenders would be complete without a consideration of their background. In the lives of the boys with whom this study deals this background plays a very large part. One-third of the 241 families studied, 82, are known to have lived in the district from five to nineteen years, and a somewhat larger number, 88, for twenty years or more.* This means that the boys belonged almost completely to the neighborhood. Most of them had lived there all their lives, and many of them always will live there. If they are to be understood aright, this neighborhood which has given them home, schooling, streets to play in, and factories to work in must also be pictured and understood.

In New York, owing perhaps to the shape of the island, the juxtaposition of tenement and mansion is unusually frequent. Walk five blocks along Forty-second Street west from Fifth Avenue and you are in the heart of the Middle West Side. The very suddenness of the change which these blocks present makes the contrast between wealth and poverty more striking and enables you to appreciate the particular form

* Thirteen families had lived in the district less than five years, and the length of residence of 58 families was not ascertained. See Appendix, Table 3, p. 168.

taken by poverty in this part of the city. Eighth Avenue, at which our district begins, looks east for inspiration and west for patronage. It is the West Sider's Broadway and Fifth Avenue combined. Here he promenades, buys his clothes, travels up and down town on the cars, or waits at night in the long queue before the entrance to a moving picture show. The pavement is flanked by rows of busy stores; saloons and small hotels occupy the street corners. There is plenty of life and movement, and as yet no obvious poverty. On Saturdays and "sale" days, the neighborhood department stores swarm with custom.

Ninth Avenue has its elevated railroad, and suffers in consequence from noise, darkness, and congestion of traffic. Here the storekeeper can no longer rely on his window to attract customers. He knows the necessity of forceful advertising, and his bedsteads and vegetables, wooden Indians and show cases, everywhere encroach upon the sidewalk. On Saturday nights "Paddy's Market" * flares in the open street, supplying for a few hours a picturesqueness which is greatly needed. Poor and untidy as this avenue is, the small tradesmen who live in it profess to look down on their less prosperous neighbors nearer the river.

West of Ninth Avenue tenements begin and rents decrease. At Tenth Avenue, where red and yellow crosstown cars swing round the corner from Forty-second Street, you have reached the center of the West Side wage-earning community, and a street which on a bright day is almost attractive. Four stories of red

* Pushcart vendors gather here and line the sidewalks, and the neighborhood shops and markets display their wares on outdoor stands to attract the Saturday night trade.

brick tenements surmount the plate glass of saloons and shops. Here and there immense colored advertisements of tobacco or breakfast foods flame from windowless side walls, and the ever-present three brass balls gleam merrily in the sunlight. But the poverty is unmistakable. You see it in the tradesman's well-substantiated boast that here is "the cheapest house for furniture and carpets in the city." You see it in the small store, eking out an existence with cigars and toys and candy. You see it in the ragged coats and broken shoes of the boys playing in the street; in the bareheaded, poorly dressed women carrying home their small purchases in oil-cloth bags; in the grocer's amazing values in "strictly fresh" eggs; in the ablebodied loafers who lounge in the vicinity of the corner saloon, subsisting presumably on the toil of more conscientious brothers and sisters. And in one other feature besides its indigence Tenth Avenue is typical of this district. At the corner of Fiftieth Street stands the shell of what was once a flourishing settlement, and beside it a smaller building which was once a church. Both, as regards their original uses, are now deserted. Both are a concrete expression not merely of failure, but of failure acquiesced in. These West Side streets are more than poor. They have ceased to struggle in their slough of despond, and have forgotten to be dissatisfied with their poverty.

Eleventh Avenue is much more dirty and disconsolate. In its dingy tenements live some of the poorest and most degraded families of this district. On the west side of the avenue and lining the cross streets are machine shops, gas tanks, abattoirs, breweries, warehouses, piano factories, and coal and lumber yards

whose barges cluster around the nearby piers. Sixty years ago this avenue, in contrast to the fair farm land upon which the rest of the district grew up, was a stretch of barren and rocky shore, ending at Forty-second Street in the flat unhealthy desolation of the Great Kill Swamp. Land in such a deserted neighborhood was cheap and little sought for, and permission to use it was readily given to the Hudson River Railroad.* Today the franchise, still continued under its old conditions, is an anomaly. All day and night, to and from the Central's yard at Thirtieth Street, long freight trains pass hourly through the heterogeneous mass of trucks, pedestrians, and playing children; and though they now go slowly and a flagman stands at every corner, "Death Avenue" undoubtedly deserves its name.

De Witt Clinton Park, the only public play space in the district, lies westward between Fifty-second and Fifty-fourth Streets. It is better known as "The Lane" from days, not so long ago, when a pathway here ran down to the river, and on either side of it the last surviving farm land gave the tenement children a playground, and the young couples of the neighborhood a place to stroll in. The usual well kept and restrained air of a small city park is very noticeable here. There is almost no grass, the swings and running tracks are, perhaps necessarily, caged by tall iron fences, and uninteresting asphalt paths cover a considerable part of the limited area. A large stone pergola, though of course it has obvious uses, somehow deepens the impression that an opportunity was lost in the laying out of this

*See Cartwright, O. G.: The Middle West Side: A Historical Sketch. (West Side Studies.) Russell Sage Foundation Publication. In Press.

Tenth Avenue

Eleventh ("Death") Avenue

place. At one side of the pergola, however, lie the plots of the school farm in which small groups of boys and girls may often be seen at work. Little attempt has been made to develop a play center in the park. On a fine Saturday afternoon it is often practically empty.*

Twelfth Avenue adjoins the Hudson River, losing itself here and there in wharves and pierheads. Two of the piers belong to the city, one being devoted to the disposal of garbage, the other to recreation. Factories and an occasional saloon are on the inland side, but there are almost no shacks or tenements.

At first sight there are no striking features about the Middle West Side. Hand-to-mouth existence reduces living to a universal sameness which has little time or place for variety. In street after street are the same crowded and unsanitary tenements; the same untended groups of playing children; the same rough men gathered round the stores and saloons on the avenue; the same sluggish women grouped on the steps of the tenements in the cross streets. The visitor will find no rambling shacks, no conventional criminal's alleys; only square, dull, monotonous ugliness, much dirt, and a great deal of apathy.

The very lack of salient features is the supreme char-

* The People's Institute has undertaken, January, 1914, a neighborhood work, which will correlate and broaden the various recreation activities now going on in the Middle West Side. A social center has been opened in Public School 17, on West Forty-seventh Street, on the initiative of the local school board. The People's Institute has taken executive charge of the work. About this center there will be focused a neighborhood movement, which will work in DeWitt Clinton playground, on West Fiftieth Street pier, in the public libraries, and on the streets.

acteristic of this neighborhood. The most noticeable fact about it is that there is nothing to notice. It is earmarked by negativeness. There is usually a lifelessness about the streets and buildings, even at their best, which is reflected in the attitude of the people who live in them. The whole scene is dull, drab, uninteresting, totally devoid of the color and picturesqueness which give to so many poor districts a character and fascination of their own. Tenth Avenue and the streets west of it are lacking in the crowds and bustle and brilliant lights of the East Side. Eleventh Avenue by night is almost dark, and throughout the district are long stretches of poorly lit cross streets in which only the dingy store windows shine feebly. Over the East River great bridges throw necklaces of light across the water; here the North River is dark and unspanned.

What is it that has brought about this condition? Why is this part of New York so utterly featureless and depressing? The answer lies primarily not with the present or past inhabitants, but in the isolation and neglect to which for years it has been subjected. Much of the Middle West Side was once naturally attractive, with prosperous homesteads and cottages with gardens.* But while other parts of Manhattan were being developed as a city, the Middle West Side was left severely alone. It was one of the last sections of the city to become thickly populated. When the first factories arrived, they brought the tenements in their wake. The worst kinds of tenements were hastily built—anything was supposed to be good enough for the poor Irish who settled there; and these tenements

* See Cartwright, op. cit. In Press.

have long survived in spite of their dilapidated condition because until recently there has been no one who cared for the rough and dull West Sider. East Side problems were much more picturesque and inviting. So our district has grown up under a heritage of desolation and neglect, uninteresting to look at, unpleasant to live in, overlooked, unsympathized with, and neglected into aloofness, till today its static population is almost isolated from and little affected by the life of the rest of the city. The casual little horse car which jingles up Tenth Avenue four times an hour is typical of the West Sider's home, just as the Draft Riots of 1863 were typical of his temper.

The nationalities which largely form the basis of the population on the Middle West Side are the German and the Irish, the latter predominating.* Peculiar to the district is the large number of families of the second generation with parents who have been born and brought up in the immediate neighborhood.

The nationality of the American-born parents throws additional light on the subject of racial make-up of the population.† There were 81 American-born fathers and 92 American-born mothers in the 241 families. The parentage of 67 American-born fathers for whom information was available was as follows: 28, German;

* See Anthony, Katharine: Mothers Who Must Earn, p. 7. (West Side Studies.) Russell Sage Foundation Publication. New York, Survey Associates, 1914.

† Of 222 fathers whose country of birth was known, 81 were born in the United States, 64 in Ireland, 27 in Germany, and 17 in Italy. Other countries were represented by numbers ranging from seven to one. Among 227 mothers, the United States was given as the place of birth of 92; Ireland, of 72; Germany, of 18; Italy, of 15. The numbers from other countries ranged from eight to one. The country of birth of 19 fathers and of 14 mothers in the 241 families could not be ascertained.

21, Irish; 15, American; and 3, English. The parentage of 73 American-born mothers was: 28, German; 25, Irish; 18, American; and 2, English. The country of birth of parents of 14 of the American-born fathers and 19 of the American-born mothers could not be ascertained.*

We are accustomed to regard the German as the best of European emigrants. He brings with him a thrift and solidity which have taught us to depend on him. He has been a welcome immigrant as he has become a successful citizen. Yet here are large numbers of Germans living in a wild no-man's-land which has a criminal record scarcely surpassed by any other district in New York. Surely this is more than a case of the exception proving the rule. It shows that our estimate of the Middle West Side is correct.

The district is like a spider's web. Of those who come to it very few, either by their own efforts, or through outside agency, ever leave it. Now and then a boy is taken to the country or a family moves to the Bronx, but this happens comparatively seldom. Usually those who come to live here find at first (like Yorick's starling) that they cannot get out, and presently that they do not want to. It is not that conditions throughout the district are economically extreme, although greater misery and worse poverty cannot be found in other parts of New York. But there is something in the dullness of these West Side streets and the traditional apathy of their tenants that crushes the wish for anything better and kills the hope of change. It is as though decades of lawlessness and neglect have formed an atmospheric monster, beyond the power and

* See Appendix, Tables 4 and 5, pp. 168 and 169.

understanding of its creators, overwhelming German and Irish alike.

Such, in brief, is the background of the West Side boy. It is a gray picture, so gray that the casual visitor to these streets may think it over-painted. But this is because a superficial glance at the Middle West Side is peculiarly misleading. So much lies below the surface. It is obvious that this district has come to be singularly unattractive, and that its methods of life are extraordinarily rough. And it is equally true that hundreds of boys never know any other place or life than this, and that most of their offenses against the law are the direct result of their surroundings. The charges brought against them in court are only in part against the boys themselves. The indictment is in the main against the city which considers itself the greatest and most progressive in the New World, for allowing any of its children to start the battle of life so poorly equipped and so handicapped for becoming efficient American citizens. Not that these youngsters have not their share of "devilment" and original sin, but in estimating the work of the juvenile court with the boys of this neighborhood, it is absolutely essential to bear in mind not only the crimes they commit, but their chances for escaping criminality. If heredity and environment have any meaning, Tenth Avenue has much to answer for.

CHAPTER II

HIS PLAYGROUND

THE boy himself is blissfully untroubled by any serious thoughts about his background; and to him these streets are as a matter of course a place to play in. This point of view is perfectly natural for several reasons:

In the first place, he has never known any other playground. At the earliest possible stage of infancy he is turned out, perhaps under an older sister's supervision, to crawl over the steps of the tenement or tumble about in the gutter in front of it, watching with large eyes the new sights around him. Here he is put to play, and here he learns to imitate the street and sidewalk games of other boys and girls. He is scarcely to be blamed for a point of view so universally held that it never occurs to him to doubt it.

In the second place, the street is the place that he must play in, whether he wants to or not. There is no room for him in the house; the janitor usually chases him off the roof. Excepting De Witt Clinton Park, which, as has been shown, is small, restricted, and inadequate, there is no park on the West Side between Seventy-second and Twenty-eighth Streets. Central Park and New Jersey are too inaccessible to be his regular playgrounds. And besides, not only will a boy not go far afield for his games, but he cannot. He is often needed at home after school hours to run

BOUNCE BALL WITH WALL AS BASE
Property is safe

BOUNCE BALL WITH STEPS AS BASE
Windows in danger

errands and make himself generally useful. Moreover, to go any distance involves a question of food and transportation; so that except at times of truancy and wanderlust, or when he is away on some baseball or other expedition, the street inevitably claims him.

And in the third place, just because this playground is so natural and so inevitable, he becomes attached to it. It is the earliest, latest, and greatest influence in his life. Long before he knew his alphabet it began to educate him, and before he could toddle it was his nursery. Every possible minute from babyhood to early manhood is spent in it. Every day, winter and summer, he is here off and on from early morning till 10 o'clock at night. It gives him a training in which school is merely a repressive interlude. From the quiet of the class room he hears its voice, and when lessons are over it shouts a welcome at the door. The attractions that it offers ever vary. Now a funeral, now a fire; "craps" on the sidewalk; a stolen ride on one of Death Avenue's freight trains; a raid on a fruit stall; a fight, an accident, a game of "cat"—always fresh incident and excitement, always nerve-racking kaleidoscopic confusion.

No wonder, then, that the streets are regarded by the boy as his rightful playground. They are the most constant and vivid part of his life. They provide companionship, invite to recklessness, and offer concealment. Every year their attraction grows stronger, till their lure becomes irresistible and his life is swallowed up in theirs.

But unfortunately for the boy everyone does not agree with him as to his right of possession. The storekeeper, for instance, insists on the incompatibility

of a vigorous street ball game with the safety of his plate glass windows. Drivers not unreasonably maintain that the road is for traffic rather than for marbles or stone throwing. Property owner, pedestrian, the hardworking citizen, each has a point of view which does not altogether favor the playground theory. At the very outset of his career, therefore, in attempting to exercise childhood's inalienable right to play, the boy finds himself colliding with the rights of property; the maintenance of public safety, the enforcement of law and order, and other things equally puzzling and annoying, all apparently united in being inimical to his ideas of amusement. He is too young to understand that in his city's scheme children were forgotten. No one can explain to him that he has been born in a congested area where lack of play space must be accepted patiently; that life is a process of give and take in which the rights of others demand as much respect as his own. He does not know that his dilemma is the problem which eternally confronts the city child. But he does know that he must play. He has a store of nervous energy and animal spirits which simply must be let loose. Yet when he tries to play under the only conditions possible to him he is hampered and repressed at every turn. Inevitably he revolts; and long before he is old enough to learn why most of his street games are illegal, fun and law-breaking have become to him inseparable, and the policeman his natural enemy.

So far the boy's attitude is normal. Childish antagonism to arbitrary authority is natural. In any large town it extends to the police. All over New York games are played with one eye on the corner and often with a small scout or two on the watch for the "cop."

But at this point two facts differentiate the Middle West Side from the rest of the city, and make its situation peculiar. On the one hand, the parents and older people of the district, instead of showing the usual indifference or at most a passive antipathy toward the police, openly conspire against and are actively hostile to them. On the other, the police, largely because of this neighborhood feeling, are utterly unable to cope with the lawless conditions which they find around them.

This state of things has been brought about in various ways. The lurid record of criminals in the district has for years necessitated methods of policing which have not made the Irish temper any less excitable. Public sentiment here is almost static, and hatred of the police has become a tradition. No one has a good word for them; everyone's hand is against them. The boys look on them as spoil-sports and laugh at their authority. The toughs and gangsters are at odds with them perforce. Fathers and mothers, resenting the trivial arrests of their children, consign the "cop," the "dinny" (detective), and "the Gerrys" to outer darkness together. The better class of residents and property owners, though their own failure to properly support them is partly to blame for the failure of the police to do their duty, frankly distrust them for being so completely incompetent and ineffective. And now perhaps no one would dare to support them. For the toughs of the district have taken the law into their own hands, and with the relentlessness and certainty of a Corsican vendetta every injury received by them is repaid, sooner or later, by some act of pitiless retaliation. Honest or dishonest, successful or otherwise,

the policeman certainly has a hard time of it. Wherever he goes he is dangerously unpopular. He cannot be safely active or inactive, and whatever he does seems to add to his difficulties. Hectored on duty, frequently bullied in court, misunderstood and abused by press and public alike, he stands out solitary, the butt and buffer of the neighborhood's disorder.

It is scarcely remarkable that under these circumstances the guardian of the law is bewildered, and tends to become unreasonably touchy and suspicious. "I tried to start a club in a saloon on Fiftieth Street a while ago," said a young Irishman of twenty-five. "After we had had the club running one night, a policeman came in and asked me for my license. I told him I didn't have any. He said he would have to break up the club then. I kicked about this and he pinched me. They brought me up for trial next morning, and the judge told me I would have to close up my club. I asked him why, and said the club was perfectly orderly and was just made up of young fellows in the neighborhood; and he said, 'Well, your club has a bad reputation, and you've got to break it up.' Now, how could a club have a bad reputation when it had only been running one day? Tell me that? But that's the way of it. Those cops will give you a bad reputation in five minutes if you never had one before in your life." "The cops are always arresting us and letting us go again," said a small West Sider. "I've been taken up two or three times for throwing stones and playing ball, but they never took me to the station house yet. You can't play baseball anywhere around here without the cops getting you." And so it has come about that relations between police and people

in this section of New York are abnormally strained. Provocation is followed by reaction, and reaction by reprisal and a constant aggravation of annoyances, till the tension continually reaches breaking point.

This situation shows very definite results in the boy. Gradually his play becomes more and more mischievous as he finds it easier to evade capture. Boylike, his delight in wanton and malicious destruction is increased by the knowledge that he will probably escape punishment. Six-year-old Dennis opens the door of the Children's Aid Society school and throws a large stone into the hall full of children. Another youngster of about the same age recently was seen trying for several minutes to break one of the street lamps. He threw stone after stone until finally the huge globe fell with a crash that could have been heard a block. Then he ran off down the street and disappeared around the corner. No one attempted to stop him; no one would tell who he was. Later on, the boy begins to admire and model himself on the perpetrators of picturesque crimes whom he sees walking unarrested in the streets around him. And by the time that he reaches the gang age he is usually a hardened little ruffian whom the safety of numbers encourages to carry his play to intolerable lengths. He robs, steals, gets drunk, carries firearms, and his propensity for fighting with stones and bottles is so marked that for days whole streets have been terrorized by his feuds. Insurance companies either ask prohibitive rates for window glass in this neighborhood or flatly refuse to insure it at all.

Meanwhile the police are not idle. Public opinion and their own records at the station house demand a certain amount of activity, and every week the play-

ground sees its arrests. In the following table we have classified by causes, from our own intimate knowledge of each individual case, the arrests which took place during 1909 among the boys of our 241 families. The court's legal system of classification has been discarded here in favor of the classification made to show the real nature of each offense. The result illustrates how entirely police intervention has failed to meet the issue in the district, and consequently explains in part why the work of the children's court with boys from this neighborhood has not proved more effectual.

OFFENSES IN 463 CASES OF ARREST AS CLASSIFIED IN THE BUREAU OF SOCIAL RESEARCH[a]

Offenses of vagrancy and neglect:	
Truancy	38
Begging	3
Selling papers at ten	18
Selling papers without a badge	5
Run-away	7
Sleeping in halls and on roofs	6
Improper guardianship	12
General incorrigibility	23
Total	112
Offenses due to play:	
Playing ball	20
Playing cat	3
Playing shinny	2
Pitching craps	26
Pitching pennies	9
Throwing stones and other missiles	44
Building fires in the street	15
Fighting	6
Total	125

[a] For the classification of these arrests according to the court charges see Chapter VI, The Boy and the Court, p. 82.

Offenses against persons:	
Assault	5
Stabbing	4
Use of firearms	3
Immorality	0
Intoxication	1
Total	13
Offenses against property:	
Illegal use of transfers	1
Petty thievery	58
Serious thievery	18
Burglary, i. e., breaking into houses and theft	36
Forgery	0
Breaking windows	4
Picking pockets	2
Total	119
Offenses of mischief and annoyance:	
Upsetting ash cans	2
Shouting and singing	6
Breaking arc lights	3
Loitering, jostling, etc	12
Stealing rides on cars	4
Profanity	1
Total	28
Unknown	73
Total	470
Deducting duplicates	7
Grand Total	463

Not only is this table extraordinarily interesting in itself, but its importance to our investigation is inestimable, because it brings out certain features of the problem with a vividness which could not be equaled in pages of discussion or narrative.

On the one hand, it is noticeable how large a propor-

tion of the arrests are for offenses which are more or less excusable in these boys. Almost every one of their offenses is due to one of four causes: neglect on the part of the parent, the pressure of poverty, the expression of pure boyish spirits, or the attempt to play. Thievery, for instance, particularly the stealing of coal from the docks or railroad tracks, is quite often encouraged at home. "Johnnie is a good boy," said one mother quite frankly. "He keeps the coal and wood box full nearly all the time. I don't have to buy none." And her attitude is typical. Shouting and singing too, and even loitering, do not seem on the face of them overwhelmingly wicked. Of course, boys sometimes choose the most impossible times and places in which to shout and sing, but is no allowance to be made for "the spirit of youth"? And as for the arrests for play, they speak for themselves. Some of these games, played when and where they are played, are unquestionably dangerous to passersby and property, while others are simply forms of gambling. But it must be remembered that the West Side boy has nowhere else to play; that his games are the games which he sees around him, and he plays them because no one has taught him anything better. The policeman, however, has no interest in the responsibility of the boys for their offenses; he is concerned merely with offenses as such, and his arrests must be determined chiefly by opportunity and by rule. All that we can ask of him is to be tolerant, broad-minded, and sympathetic—a request with which he will find it difficult enough to comply if only because of the atmosphere of hostility against him.

On the other hand, it is remarkable how seldom the

boys are caught for very serious offenses.* Most of the arrests shown here are for causes which are comparatively trifling. Yet the whole neighborhood seethes with the worst kinds of criminality, and many of the boys are almost incredibly vicious. Stabbing, assault, the use of firearms, acts of immorality, do not appear in this table to an extent remotely approximating the frequency with which they occur. In other words, the police absolutely fail to cover the ground. Although a large proportion of arrests does take place, they are mostly on less important charges, and often involve any one but the young criminal whose capture is really desirable. The little sister of one boy who was "taken" expressed the position exactly when she said, "The only time Jimmy was caught was when he wasn't doin' anything bad."

In this way it happens that the fact of a boy's arrest is no clue to his character. Again and again boys "get away with" their worst crimes, secretly committed, in which they are protected from discovery by the neighborhood's code of ethics; whereas for minor offenses, of which they are openly guilty, they are far more likely to be arrested. Some of the worst offenders may never be caught at all. And if one of them is taken, it is probably for some technical misdemeanor which the officer has used less for its own importance than as a pretext for getting the boy into court. What is the result? The policeman is lectured by the judge for being an oppressor of the poor, and the boy is discharged, though his previous record would entitle him to a severe sentence, as both boy and policeman know.

Not unnaturally, respect for the court is soon lost,

* See Chapter VI, pp. 95 ff.

ways. There is something about those dark, narrow passages which makes them seem built for gangs to meet or play or plot in. The youth of the district and his girl find other uses for them, but the boy and his playmates have marked them for their games. Neighbors who have no other place to "hang around in" may protest, but the boys play on. They dirty the floors, disturb the tenements by their noises, run into people, and if they are lying here in wait are apt to chip away the wainscoting or tear the burlap off the walls. But what do they care! It's all in the day's play; and if the janitor objects, so much the better, for he can often be included in a game of chase.

Streets, roofs, docks, hallways,—these, then, are the West Side boy's playground, and will be for many years to come. And what a playground it is! Day and night, workdays and holidays alike, the streets are never quiet, from the half-hour before the factory whistles blow in the early morning, when throngs of men and boys are hurrying off to work, to still earlier morning hours when they echo with the footsteps of the reveler returning home. All day long an endless procession of wagons, drays, and trucks, with an occasional automobile, jolts and clatters up and down the avenue. Now and then an ambulance or undertaker's cart arrives, drawing its group of curious youngsters to watch the casket or stretcher carried out. Drunken men are omnipresent, and drunken women are seen. Street fights are frequent, especially in the evening, and, except for police annoyance or when "guns" come into play, are generally regarded as diversions. Every crime, every villainy, every form of sexual indulgence and perversion is practiced in the district and talked

of openly. The sacredness of life itself finds no protecting influence in these blocks. There is no rest, no order, no privacy, no spaciousness, no simplicity; almost nothing that youth, the city's everlasting hope, should have, almost everything that it should not.

A family from another state moved recently into one of these tenements. The only child, a boy of fifteen, after several tentative efforts to reconcile himself to street life, came in and announced his intention of staying in the flat in leisure time thereafter, as he was shocked and his finer feelings were hurt by what he saw of the street life around him. His mother tried to persuade him to go out, but the boy told her she had no idea what she was doing, and refused to go. He attempted to take his airings on the roof, but was ordered down by the janitor. Finally he yielded to his mother's persuasion and went back to the street. Within three months this boy, a type of the bright, clean boyhood of our smaller towns, had become marked by dissipation and had once even come home intoxicated.

What chance has the best of boys who must spend two-thirds of his school days in such a playground? What wonder that he becomes a callous young criminal, when the very conditions of his play lead him to crime? The whole influence of such conditions on a child's life can never be gauged. But just as apart from his traditions and background he is incomprehensible as a boy, so, as a wanton little ruffian, he is unintelligible apart from his playground. This develops his play into mischief and his mischief into crime. It educates him superficially in the worst sides of life, and makes him cynical, hard, and precocious. It takes

from him everything that is good; almost everything that it gives him is bad. Its teachings and tendencies are not civic but anti-social, and the boy reflects them more and more. Every year he adds to a history of lawless achievement which the court, police, and institutions alike have proved powerless to prevent. And every day the Middle West Side bears witness to the truth of the saying that "a boy without a playground is the father of the man without a job."

CHAPTER III

HIS GAMES

IT would be impossible to describe the thousand and one uses to which the West Side boy puts his playground. After all, the street is not such a bad place to play in if you have known nothing better; and as you tumble out of school on a fine afternoon, ready for mischief, it offers you almost anything, from a fight with your best friend to a ride on the steps of an ice wagon. But certain games and sports are so universal in this district as to deserve separate mention.

Spring is the season for marbles. On any clear day in March or February you may find the same scene on roadway and sidewalks of every block—a huddle of multicolored marbles in the middle of a ring, and a group of excited youngsters, shrieking, quarreling, and tumbling all over each other, just outside the circle. Instead of the time-honored chalk ring the boys often use the covers of a manhole, whose corrugated iron surface offers obstacles and therefore gives opportunity for unusual skill. Another game consists in shooting marbles to a straight line drawn along the middle of the sidewalk; thus one such game may be continued through the whole length of the block. In another the marbles are pitched against a brick wall or against the curbstone, and the boy whose marbles stop closest to a chalked mark wins the marbles of all competitors.

As the fall days grow shorter and the afternoons more crisp, bonfires become the rage. The small boy has an aptitude for finding wood at need in places where one would suppose that no fuel of any kind would be obtainable. A careless grocer leaves a barrel of waste upon the sidewalk. In five minutes' time that barrel may be burning in the middle of the street with a group of cheering youngsters warming their hands at the blaze, or watching it from their seats on the curbstone. The grocer may berate the boys and threaten disaster to the one who lit the barrel, but he is seldom able to find the culprit. Before the barrel is completely burned some youngster produces a stick or two which he has found in an areaway or pulled from a passing wagon, and adds it to the fire. Stray newspapers, bits of excelsior, rags, and even garbage are contributed to keep the fire going, regardless of the effect on the olfactory nerves of the neighborhood. The police extinguish these fires whenever they can, but the small boy meets this contingency by posting scouts, and on the alarm of "Cheese it!" the fire is stamped out and the embers are hastily concealed. The "cop" sniffs at the smoke and looks at the boys suspiciously, but suspicions do not bother the boys—they are used to them—and when he has passed on down the street the fragments of the fire are reassembled and lighted again. On a cold evening one may see half a dozen of these bonfires flaming in different directions, each with a group of small figures playing around them. Sticks are thrust into the fire and waved in figures in the air; and among them very often circle larger and brighter spots of light which glow into a full flame when the motion ceases. These are fire pots, an

ingenious invention consisting of an empty tomato can with a wire loop attached to the top by which to swing it, and filled with burning wood. This amusement might seem harmless enough if it were not for the fact that these fire pots, being of small boy construction, have an unfortunate habit of slipping from the wire loop just as they are being most rapidly hurled.

On election night, until recently, the boys' traditional right of making bonfires has been observed. These bonfires are sometimes elaborate. As early as the middle of October the youngsters begin hoarding wood for the great occasion. They pile the fuel in the rear of a tenement or in the areaway or basement of some friendly grocer, or perhaps in a vacant lot or at the rear of a factory. Frequently to save their plunder they find it necessary to post guards for the few days preceding election, and even so, bonfire material often becomes the center of a furious gang fight. A few of the stronger gangs have a settled policy of letting some other gang collect their fuel for them, and then raiding them at the last minute. The victors carry the wood back triumphantly to their own block, and the vanquished are left either to collect afresh or to make reprisal on a still weaker gang. This kind of warfare continues even while the fires are burning on election night. A gang will swoop down unawares on a rival bonfire, scatter the burning material, and retire with the unburnt pieces to their own block.* A recent election time, however, proved a gloomy one for the little West Siders. Wagons appeared in the streets, filled with fire hose and manned by firemen and police. The police scattered the boys while the firemen drenched the fires,

* For account of one of these raids see Chapter IV, pp. 48-49.

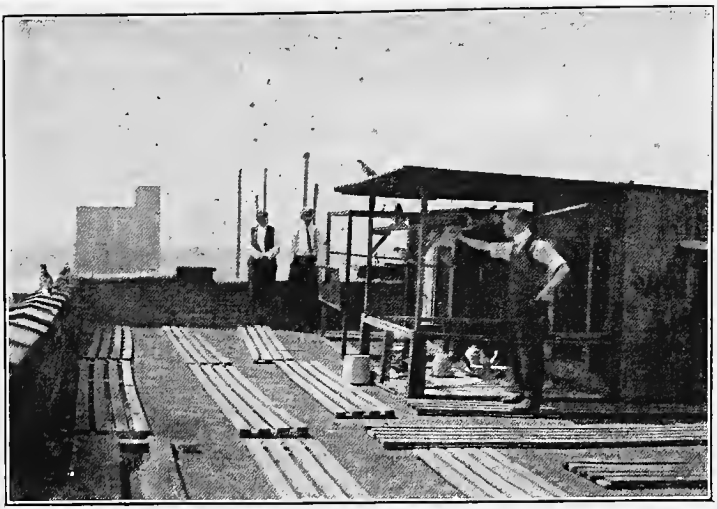
and by 8 o'clock the streets, formerly so picturesque and so dangerous, presented a sad and sober appearance. The tenement lights shone out on heaps of blackened embers and on groups of despairing youngsters who were not even permitted to stand on the corners and contemplate the destruction of their evening's festivities.

In the winter the shortcomings of the street as a playground are especially evident. Frost and sleet and a bitter wind give few compensations for the discomfort which they bring. Traffic, the street cleaning department, and the vagaries of the New York climate, make most ways of playing in the snow impossible. But snowballing continues, in spite of the efforts of the police to prevent it. It is open to the same objections as baseball in the street, for the freedom which is possible in the small towns or in the country cannot be tolerated in a crowded district where a snowball which misses one mark is almost certain to hit another. Moreover, owing to the facility with which these boys take to dangerous forms of sport, the practice of making snowballs with a stone or a piece of coal in the middle and soaking them in ice water is even more prevalent here than in most other localities. Of course, snowballing is forbidden and abhorred by the neighborhood, and everyone takes a hand in chastising the juvenile snowball thrower. Nevertheless, the afternoon of the first fall is sure to bring a snow fight, and the innocent passerby is likely to be involuntarily included in the game.

Marbles and bonfires and snowballs are the sports of the smaller boys exclusively, but other games which are less seasonal are played by old and young alike.

"Shooting craps," for instance, and pitching or matching pennies, are occupations which endure all the year round and are participated in by grown men as well as by boys. On a Sunday morning dozens of crap games are usually in full swing along the streets. Only two players handle the dice, but almost any number of bystanders can take part by betting amongst themselves on the throw—"fading," as it is called. Pennies, dimes, or dollar bills, according to the prosperity of the bettor, will be thrown upon the sidewalk, for craps is one of the cheapest and most vicious forms of gambling, since there is absolutely no restriction in the betting. Perfect strangers may join in at will if the players will let them, and there are innumerable opportunities for playing with crooked dice. It is one of the chief forms of sidewalk amusements in this neighborhood.

Up above the sidewalks, on the roofs of the tenements, there is some flying of small kites, but pigeon flying is the chief sport. It provides an occupation less immediately remunerative, perhaps, than games of chance, but developed by the same unmoral tendencies which seem to turn all play in the district into vice. Some boys, through methods of accretion peculiar to this neighborhood, have a score or more of pigeons which are kept in the house, and taken up to the roof regularly every Sunday, and oftener during the summer, for exercise. The birds are tamed and carefully taught to return to their home roofs after flight, but ingenious boys have discovered many ways of luring them to alien roofs, so that now the sport of pigeon flying is as dangerously exciting as a commercial venture in the days of the pirates. Pigeon owners also train their birds to circle about the neighborhood and



Pigeon Flying. A Roof Game

Marbles. A Street Game

bring back strangers. These strangers are taken inside, fed, and accustomed to the place before they are released again. On Sunday mornings and Sunday evenings the pigeons are to be seen flying around the neighborhood, while behind the chimneys of every fourth or fifth tenement house are crouched one or two small boys armed with long sticks, occasionally giving a low peculiar whistle to attract the pigeons coming from distant roofs. The sticks have a triple use. Pigeon owners use them to force their pigeons to fly for exercise; the little pigeon thieves on the roofs have a net on the end of their sticks for catching the bird when it alights; and most pigeons are trained to remain passive at the touch of the stick so that they may be picked up easily by their owner. This training, of course, operates to the advantage of the thief as well as of the owner, and valuable birds are sometimes lured away and held for ransom.

The two chief sports of the Middle West Side—baseball and boxing—are perennial. The former, played as it always is, with utter carelessness and disregard of surroundings, is theoretically intolerable, but it flourishes despite constant complaints and interference. The diamond is marked out on the roadway, the bases indicated by paving bricks, sticks, or newspapers. Frequently guards are placed at each end of the block to warn of the approach of police. One minute a game is in full swing; the next, a scout cries "Cheese it!" Balls, bats, and gloves disappear with an alacrity due to a generation of practice, and when the "cop" appears round the corner the boys will be innocently strolling down the streets. Notwithstanding these precautions, as the juvenile court records

show, they are constantly being caught. In a great majority of these match games too much police vigilance cannot be exercised, for a game between a dozen or more boys, of from fourteen to eighteen years of age, with a league ball, in a crowded street, with plate glass windows on either side, becomes a joke to no one but the participants. A foul ball stands innumerable chances of going through the third-story window of a tenement, or of making a bee line through the valuable plate glass window of a store on the street level, or of hitting one of the passersby. And if the hit is a fair one, it is as likely as not to land on the forehead of a restive horse, or to strike some little child on the sidewalk farther down the street. When one sees the words "Arrested for playing with a hard ball in a public street" written on a coldly impersonal record card in the children's court one is apt to become indignant. But when you see the same hard ball being batted through a window or into a group of little children on this same public street, the matter assumes an entirely different aspect.

Clearly, from the community's point of view, the playing of baseball in the street is rightly a penal offense. It annoys citizens, injures persons and property, and interferes with traffic. But for all that, it is not abolished, and probably under present municipal conditions never will be, simply because there is another point of view, that of the boy, and his protest against its suppression is almost equally unanswerable. The store windows are filled with a tempting array of baseball gloves and bats offered at prices as close as possible to his means, and every effort is made by responsible business men, who themselves know the law

and the need for order on the streets, to induce him to buy them. Selling the boy those bats and balls is a form of business and is perfectly legal. And the boy cannot see why, after having paid his money for them, the merchant should have all the benefit of the transaction. The game is in itself perfectly harmless; and childhood has an abiding resentment against apparently inexplicable injustice. Perhaps the small boy believes that except for the odds against him his right to make use of the street in his own way is as assured as that of anyone else. Perhaps he reflects that he too has to make sacrifices; that a broken window means usually a lost ball, and a damaged citizen, a ruined game. At any rate he continues to play, and as things are, has a fairly good case for doing so.

This neighborhood is also full of regularly organized ball teams, ranging in the age of players from ten to thirty years. Many of the large factories have teams made up of their own employes. Almost every street gang has its own team, as has almost every social club. These teams meet in regularly matched games, on the waterfront, in the various city parks, or over in New Jersey. Practically all the teams, old and young alike, play for stakes, ranging from two to five dollars a side. When they do not, they call it simply a "friendly" game. There is no organization among them; one team challenges another, and the two will decide on some place to play the game. A few of the adult teams lease Sunday grounds in New Jersey, but most of them trust to the chance of finding one. The baseball leaders of the neighborhood usually have uniforms, and to belong to a uniformed team is one of the great ambitions of the West Side boy.

Down on the waterfront the broad, smooth quays offer a tempting place for baseball, especially on Sundays and summer evenings, when they are generally bare of freight. But it has one serious drawback, that a foul ball on one side invariably goes into the river, and the players must have either several balls or a willing swimmer if the game is to continue long. One Sunday game, for instance, between two fourteen-year-old teams, played near the water, cost five balls, varying in price from 50 cents to $1.00 each. The game was played before a scrap-iron yard, the high fence of which was used as a backstop. Fifty feet to the right was the Hudson River. Within a hundred feet of second base, in the center field, a slip reached from the line of the river to the street, which was just beyond third base on the other side. Behind the sixteen-foot fence of the scrap-iron yard were a savage dog at large and a morose watchman to keep out river thieves. Thus hemmed in by water on two sides, a street car line and a row of glass windows on the third side, and a high fence, a savage dog, and a watchman on the fourth, the boys started the game. In the first inning a new dollar ball was fouled over the fence into the scrap-iron yard and the watchman refused to let the boys in to hunt for it. The game was stopped while a deputation of boys from both sides walked up to a nearby street to buy a new fifty-cent ball. The first boy up when the game was resumed batted this ball into the Hudson River, where a youthful swimmer got it, and climbing ashore down the river, made away with it. A third ball was secured, and before the game was half over this ball was batted into the river, where it lodged underneath a barge full of paving stones which

was made fast to the dock, and could not be recovered. Then a fourth ball was produced. This lasted till the game was almost finished, though it was once batted deep into center field, where it bounced into the slip and stopped the game while it was being fished out. Finally it followed the first ball into the scrap-iron yard, and neither taunts nor pleas could move the obdurate watchman to let the boys in to find it. The game was finished with a fifth ball which was the personal property of one of the boys. On the occasion of another game in this same place two balls were batted into the scrap-iron yard and lost while the teams were warming up before the match began. A third ball was batted into the river twice but both times it was recovered. Baseball is played on the docks unmodified, but in the streets the boys make use of various adaptations, some of which dispense with the bat and in consequence lessen the dangers of the game.

Ball playing continues sporadically all the year round, and never loses popularity, but it is, of course, mainly a game for the summer. During the winter among the small boys, youths, and men alike, boxing is the all-absorbing sport. It is hard for an outsider to understand the tremendous hold which prize fighting has upon the boys in a neighborhood of this kind. Fights are of course of common occurrence, not only among children but among grown men. This in itself gives a great impetus to the study of the art of self-defense. Good fighters become known early in this district. Professional prize fighters are everywhere; and for every boy who has actually succeeded in getting into the prize ring on one or more occasions, there are a dozen who are eager and anxious for an opportunity.

The various athletic clubs of the city always offer chances to boys from fourteen to sixteen years old to appear in the "preliminaries," as the boxing contests which precede the main bout of the evening are called. A boy who gains a reputation as a street fighter and boxer will be recommended to the manager of an athletic club as a likely aspirant. He is given a chance to box in one or two rounds with another would-be prize fighter in a "preliminary." If he makes a good showing, he is paid from five to fifteen dollars according to his ability and experience, and is given another chance. If he can continue to make favorable appearances in these preliminaries, he will soon be given a chance of taking part in a six or eight-round bout at one of the smaller athletic clubs, and from that time on he takes regular status as a prize fighter, and accordingly becomes a hero in his circle of youthful acquaintances. There are many such small prize fighters in our district, none of them over twenty-one years of age, and all earning just enough to make it possible to lead a life of indolence. If they can make ten or fifteen dollars by appearing in a ring once a week, they are quite content.

But boxing and street fighting by no means always go together on the Middle West Side. The real professional boxers of the neighborhood dissociate them in practice as well as in theory; they take their profession for what it is—a game to be played in a sportsmanlike manner—and they are usually good-natured. One of the best known prize fighters of the city, who lives on the Middle West Side, states that it is years since he was mixed up in a fight of any kind. "I box

PRIZE FIGHTERS IN TRAINING

CRAPS WITH MONEY AT STAKE

because I like the game," he said, "but I've no use for fighting."

Another man, an exceedingly clever lightweight boxer, who has appeared several times in the ring in New York City clubs, was boxing one night with a rather crude amateur. The bout was really for the instruction of the amateur, and both boxers were going very easily by agreement. Suddenly the amateur landed an unintentionally hard blow upon the eye of his opponent, just as the latter was stepping forward. The eye became fearfully discolored and the whole side of the boxer's face swelled. But in spite of his evident feeling that the amateur had taken an unfair advantage in striking so hard when his opponent was off his guard, the lightweight fighter laughed and submitted to treatment for the eye without losing his temper in the least, and freely accepted the apologies of the other.

This is boxing at its best, but unfortunately its tendencies are more usually toward unfairness and brutality than otherwise. Boys are taught to box early in this district. It is not uncommon to see a bout between youngsters of seven or eight being watched by a crowd of young men, who encourage the combatants by cheering every successful blow, but pay no attention to palpable fouls or obvious attempts to take a dishonest advantage. Even some of the best of the prize fighters frankly say that once in the ring the extent to which they foul is only a question of how much they can deceive the referee. And when this questionable code of ethics is passed on by these heroes and leaders of sentiment to the boys who have no referee and no thought beyond that of winning by dis-

abling an opponent as much as possible, the sport degenerates into an unfair and tricky test of endurance. Striking with the open hand, kicking, tripping, hitting in a clinch, all these unfair practices are considered a great advantage if one can "get away with it." The West Side youngster sees very little of the real professional boxers who, from the very nature of their somewhat strenuous employment, must keep in good condition, as a rule retire early, drink little, and do a great deal of hard gymnastic work. But of their brutalized hangers-on, the "bruisers," who frequent the saloons and street corners and pose as real fighters, he sees a great deal; consequently, as a whole, prize fighting must be classed as one of the worst influences of the neighborhood. It is too closely allied with street fighting, and too easily turned to criminal purposes. The bully who learns to box will use his acquired knowledge as a means of enforcing his superiority on the street, and if he is beaten will have recourse to weapons or any other means of maintaining his prestige.

Baseball and boxing bring to a close the list of common outdoor games played by boys on the Middle West Side,—just ordinary games, modified by a particular environment and played in a shifting and spasmodic way which is characteristic of it. It remains to emphasize the lesson taught by their effects on boy life as they are practiced in this neighborhood.

The philosophy of the West Side youngster is practical and not speculative. Otherwise he could not fail to notice very early in his career that the world in general, from the mother who bundles him out of an overcrowded tenement in the morning, to the grown-ups in the street playground where most of his time is spent,

seem to think him very much in the way. All day long this fact is borne in upon him. If a wagon nearly runs over him the driver lashes him with the whip as he passes to teach him to "watch out." If he plays around a store door the proprietor gives him a cuff or a kick to get rid of him. If he runs into someone he is pushed into the gutter to teach him better. And if he is complained of as a nuisance the policeman whacks him with hand or club to notify him that he must play somewhere else. Moreover, everything that he does seems to be against the law. If he plays ball he is endangering property by "playing with a hard ball in a public place." If he plays marbles or pitches pennies he is "obstructing the sidewalk," and craps, quite apart from the fact that it is gambling, constitutes the same offense. Street fighting individually or collectively is "assault," and a boy guilty of none of these things may perforce be "loitering." In other words he finds that property or its representatives are the great obstacles between him and his pleasure in the streets. And in considering our problem neither the principal cause of this situation nor its results must be lost sight of.

The great drawback to normal life on the Middle West Side is that it is a dual neighborhood. Tenements and industrial establishments are so inextricably mixed that the demands of the family and the needs of industry and commerce are eternally in conflict. The same streets must be used for all purposes; and one of the chief sufferers is the boy. More obvious, however, than this cause of a complex situation are the results of it, two of which are especially noticeable. The first is the inevitableness with which the boy

accepts—and must accept—illegal and immoral amusements as a matter of course. The spirit of youth is forced to become a criminal tendency, and sport and the rights of property are forced into antagonism. And in the second place, partly because of this, partly because their association with the toughs of the street predisposes them to imitate vice and rowdyism, the boys come to take a positive pleasure in such activities as retaliation by theft and destruction of property. Stores and basements in this district are sometimes completely abandoned owing to the stone throwing and persecution of a youthful gang which has found their occupants too strenuously hostile or defensive. Undoubtedly the street is the most inadequate of playgrounds and throws many difficulties of prevention and interruption in the path of sport. But these obstacles are from their nature provocative of contest, and sport flourishes with a Hydra-like vitality. Nothing short of impossibility will keep the boy and his game apart.

CHAPTER IV

HIS GANGS

IT is frequently necessary in these chapters to consider the boy of the Middle West Side as a type; and in discussing the causes and possible solution of the conditions which have produced him it is easy to forget that what the individual boy actually is at the moment is also of very real importance. But as a matter of fact it is not the boy individually but the boy collectively that is the policeman's bane and the district's despair. Once on the street the boy is no longer an individual but a member of a gang; and it is with and through the gang that he justly earns a reputation which provoked an irate citizen recently to suggest that for the New York street urchin boiling in burning oil was too good a fate. The court finds him a little villain, and newspapers tell the public that he is a little desperado; but those who know him best know that he is probably worse than either court or public suppose, and that for this the development of the gang on the West Side is primarily responsible.

The formation of "sets" or "gangs" is almost a law of human nature, and boyhood one of its most constant exponents, for a boy is gregarious naturally as well as by training. And over here, where the sociable Irish-American element predominates and children rarely mention the word "home," it is inevitable that the gang should flourish and its members try to find in

its activities the rough affection, comfort, and amusement which a dirty and overcrowded tenement room has failed to give.

The West Side gang is in its origin perfectly normal. In the words of one of the boys, "De kids livin' on de street jist naturally played together, an' stuck together w'en anything came up about kids from any other street." Nothing is more entirely natural and spontaneous, and it is exasperating to reflect that nothing could be a more persuasive and uplifting power in the boy's life than the gang's development when given proper scope and direction. Its influence is strong and immediate. The gang contains the friends to whose praise and criticism he is most keenly sensitive, its standards are his aims, and its activities his happiness. Untrammeled by the perversion of special circumstances it might encourage his latent interests, train him to obedience and loyalty, show him the method and the saving of co-operation, and teach him the beauty of self-sacrifice. Gang life at its best does so. The universal endorsement and success of the Boy Scout movement, for instance, in almost every country living under Western civilization, shows this most clearly. Association and rivalry should bring out what is best in a boy; but on the Middle West Side it almost invariably brings out what is worst. Practically, under present conditions, it is inevitable that this should be so; but with the first movement toward amelioration such a result becomes less necessary.

Take the case of a certain gang typical of this neighborhood. This gang is now several years old, but its membership is almost exactly what it was four or five years ago. Its members singled each other out from

Boy Scouts and Soldiers

After the Battle

the throng of children in their immediate neighborhood and first made for themselves a cave between two lumber piles in a neighboring yard. All one summer they met in this "hang-out"; here they brought the "loot," as they call the product of their marauding expeditions, threw craps, pitched pennies, played cards, smoked, told stories, and fought. But they were disturbed by early disaster in the shape of the business needs of the lumber company, which one day caused their shack to be torn down over their heads. They made their headquarters next in the empty basement of a tenement, but soon moved at the well reinforced request of the landlord. After an exiled period of meeting on the street corners, the boys conceived the idea of building their own habitation in the protection of their own homes. They began a small wooden structure in the areaway of the tenement in which the leader lived. But civil war broke out, and in one unhappy culmination the leader of the gang chased his own little brother up two flights of stairs with a hatchet. The little brother promptly "squealed," and the projected headquarters was destroyed by parental decree.

There followed another interval of meeting on the streets, and then one of the workers in a neighboring settlement became interested. She arranged to have the boys hold meetings in the settlement once a week. They were given certain privileges in the gymnasium and game rooms also, which kept them happily occupied and away from the street influences. But the settlement was closed suddenly and the gang went back to the streets once more. Here is a case in which a gang were from the outset driven from pillar to post

by the deficiencies of their surroundings as a playground, and made to feel that every man's hand was against them. When kindness was shown to them they responded at once. And scores of other gangs, if they were given the chance, would respond in the same way.

There are two salient features of gang life in this neighborhood. Both can be easily explained and abundantly illustrated; the second alone applies equally to schoolboy gangs and to adult gangs—for bands of adult rowdies exist, too, and the semi-mythical "Gopher Gang"* is a terror to conjure with. The first of these features is the loyalty which the gang invariably shows to a single street or block. As a gang is naturally formed of boys who live in the same tenement or next door to each other, or at least in the same block, and as their chief playground is likely to be the street in front of that block, it naturally becomes a matter of convenience as well as of honor to defend that playground from the inroads of any other gang. In this way loyalty to one block becomes a principle and a basis of gang organization. But individuals are not always loyal to their home block. If a boy becomes a member of a gang on Fiftieth Street, for example, and then moves to Thirtieth Street, or even farther, he may return and continue to belong to his old gang. Similarly, a Thirtieth Street gang will number among its ranks former residents who now live in other localities. At the same time, both gangs are continually being recruited by new arrivals in the community. When a boy moves he simply uses his own discretion

* This term is commonly applied to all the thugs and loafers of the Middle West Side.

as to whether to join the new gang or to continue to belong to the old.

The gang is constantly increasing or decreasing its numbers. It does not necessarily include the whole street except in a very general sense. Its nucleus is to be found in probably a dozen or fifteen kindred spirits in the street. For purposes of war, or for demonstrations at election time, or on any such occasion when there is either safety or pleasure in numbers, the other boys in the street are added to this group. Thus the real Fiftieth Street gang may not number more than 20 or 25 members, but its fighting strength when pitted against the Fifty-thirds will be nearly a hundred. Again, while there may be one group of 15 or 20 boys known as "The Fiftieth Street Gang," yet on Fiftieth Street between any two avenues will be found a dozen or more similar groups, each with a leader and a coherent social consciousness. The one among these groups which will be called the Fiftieth Street gang is likely to be so known either because it contains the boy who, for one reason or another, has become the recognized street leader, or because its members are better known or more daring than any other group, so that it will be around this particular group that all the others will rally when the occasion calls. The territorial limit of a gang is usually the length of one single cross street between two avenues. In a single week fights took place between the Fiftieth Street gang between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues, and the Fifty-third Street gang in the same district; between the Forty-ninth Street gang between Ninth and Tenth Avenues combined with the Forty-ninth Street gang between Tenth and

Eleventh Avenues, and the Forty-seventh Street gang between Ninth and Tenth Avenues.

Loyalty to their home block would be a good habit in boyish *camaraderie* if it merely took the form of peaceable rivalry; but as gang life exists at present on the Middle West Side it becomes a chronic incentive to lawlessness. For the second salient feature of gang life is the propensity of the gang to street fighting. Personal and collective jealousies and feuds have become so habitual and endless among the boys here that the history of their gangs is little less than a record of continuous violence of every kind. No doubt the strain of the constant repression before alluded to in some measure accounts for this; but possibly it is due in general to a contact with the streets and in particular to the bad influence of the older toughs on whom they model themselves and who often attain heroic position in their eyes. The boys of gangs in the country play that they are armies, emperors, or kings that they have read of in books or heard of in stories told. But the city boys of the West Side prefer to imitate local celebrities whom they know or local deeds of fame with which they are more intimately acquainted. And the danger of this vulgarized hero worship lies in the fact that, while a country lad must imagine the surroundings and implements for imitating the deeds of story book heroes, the city boy can find on every side of him the real materials used by his models, the Gophers.

The jargon of the thief and the yeggman is common among these boys' gangs. They talk casually of murder and robbery as though these were familiar events in their lives. They lay tentative plans for the rob-

bery of stores or saloons with no more real intention of commission than the schoolboy football player has of actual achievement when he imagines what he would do if his team were playing Yale. They talk easily and knowingly of "turning off" various people in the neighborhood, by which they mean robbing them. They threaten each other with murder and other dire forms of assault, and undoubtedly think that they mean to carry out their threats. The first active manifestation of this state of mind consists often in carrying concealed weapons. The boy obtains a broken revolver from some place or finds or steals a good one. He will reveal this weapon to his awestruck playmates and soon come to pose as a bold, ruffianly spirit. Usually this phase passes away harmlessly enough. Few of the younger residents of this neighborhood are really armed, though most of them would have their companions believe that they are. Occasionally some youngster does manage to carry a revolver, bowie knife, or slingshot, and his subsequent career is likely to bring him very early into serious contact with the police. But however late or soon the manifestation, the gangs are permeated by the tendency to disorder and crime which is the result of criminal example. It is the old story; only the worst and most vicious form of the gang spirit has a chance of finding expression in these streets. And so gang warfare has become not the exception but the rule, and the violence and ferocity with which the small boys pursue their feuds excites the alarm of the entire neighborhood.

"There has always been more or less fighting among the gangs of boys on the streets," a physician of long

residence recently remarked, "but they are getting worse in character every year until now it seems that they will stop at nothing. They carry knives, clubs, and even, I have heard, revolvers. Sometimes arrests are made, but they never amount to anything, for the boys are always released without punishment. If an outsider tries to interfere, ordinarily both gangs turn on him. They terrorize the neighborhood with their fights, breaking windows and injuring passersby with stones. Only recently one of these fights broke out almost in front of my house, and a score or more, most of them armed with beer bottles, were engaged in it. I got a boy by the shoulder and asked him what he was doing with the bottle. 'Oh,' he said, 'I am just taking it to the store to get it filled.' Then he laughed in my face and the rest of the gang burst out laughing. I could do nothing with them, and had to retire to my office."

Sometimes fights are more or less unpremeditated, arising from chance encounters between two rival gangs; but very often they are formally arranged and generaled in approved military fashion. One evening recently a furious battle took place between two gangs of small boys numbering nearly 50 to the gang, and all apparently from eight to fifteen years old. One gang proceeded down the street from the corner at which they had assembled and met the other gang coming from the opposite direction. They stopped about 100 feet apart and formed two compact masses, screaming and shouting encouragement to their own side and insults to the enemy. Then one of the gangs moved slowly forward. Some one among their opponents threw a beer bottle into the advancing crowd, and a scene of wild riot fol-

lowed. Clubs, stones, and beer bottles were hurled through the air, many of them taking effect and many of the bottles smashing on the pavement. A crowd gathered on both sides behind the combatants and windows on all sides were filled with spectators. None of the boys came into personal contact with their opponents. Most of them contented themselves with hurling missiles indiscriminately into the opposing group. In the midst of the mêlée two boys were maneuvering for over a minute, each armed with a beer bottle which he was trying to land on his opponent from a distance of not more than eight or ten feet. They ducked, dodged, and side-stepped, then finally one boy threw his bottle. The other boy dropped flat to the pavement and the bottle came so close to his body that it looked for an instant as though it had hit him. If it had, it might easily have killed him, for it was hurled with terrific force. But the boy sprang up and threw his bottle at the other youngster, who was now retreating.

Just as it was growing dark someone fired two shots from a revolver—whether loaded with blank or bullet cartridges it was of course impossible to tell—and now for the first time protest from the spectators began to rise even above the din of the fight. At the same moment from scouts in the rear guard of both armies came the watchword of the West Side, "Cheese it!" In an incredibly short space of time both gangs were rushing at top speed back toward their respective gathering places. When everything was quiet, two policemen turned the corner, walked solemnly down to the middle of the block, and returned. There were, of course, no arrests. One gang had rallied at a point

about 100 yards to the west of the avenue, and were starting back to the battleground again when two small boys concealed in a cellarway at the corner shrieked out another warning. The gang broke up again and the next minute a discomfited policeman stepped out from a doorway where he had been concealed and came along the street.

At the corner of Ninth Avenue two men were indignantly discussing the fight. "Those boys do more to ruin property and lower real estate values around here than any other three causes," said one of the men. "They're having these fights continually now and they seem to grow worse all the time. Suppose that some passerby had been in the way of that revolver which was shot down the street just now. Nothing could have been done. You can't find out who had the revolver. The police won't try to make any arrests, and if they do, the boys are always let right out again. The insurance companies won't insure plate glass in this neighborhood any more, and the whole place seems to be just at the mercy of these little ruffians."

On one occasion a gang was short of bonfire material at election time. The members raided a neighboring street, took the gang there by surprise, extinguished its celebration bonfires, and carried the wood in triumph back to their own street. War was immediately declared by the despoiled, and a regular after-school campaign followed. Through an injury to one of their number the gang in an intervening street became involved, and sided with the bonfire stealers. War then became general and for a year was a constant subject for discussion among old and young in the neighborhood. The boys of the defensive gang more than held

Resting. What Next?

Early Lessons in Craps

their own. They descended upon the allies from the intervening street and vanquished them on their own territory. They fought with even honors in foreign territory the gang which originally started the trouble, and repelled several invasions decisively. Finally these terms were offered: The defensive gang formally notified their opponents that if they could succeed in forcing their way from the upper avenue to a Roman Catholic church about three-quarters of the way down the street, they would accept defeat. Night after night the gang thus challenged made the attempt, but never succeeded.

It is not uncommon for fights to end by a formal match between two opposing leaders, though very often, particularly if the leader of the weaker gang wins, these conflicts are indecisive because the stronger gang will not accept defeat. In one case two gangs entered into a formal truce because one gang was obliged to go through the other's territory on the way to school, and found it inexpedient to fight a battle four times a day. The other gang recognized the justice of this position and according to compact permitted their enemies to go through the street unmolested throughout the school year.

Tales of this kind could be multiplied almost indefinitely, for the exploits of boyish gangs dominate the West Side problem. Such headlines as

UPPER WEST SIDE DISTURBED

BOYS DISCHARGE RIFLES—ONE MAN SHOT AND WINDOWS BROKEN *

* New York *Tribune*, December 18, 1911.

GIRL SHOT IN GANG FIGHT

Seriously Wounded While Walking in Eleventh Avenue—Assailant Escapes *

are comparatively common in the newspapers; yet most of the occurrences of this kind in the district never reach the ears of a reporter. The following is from the press account of a typical gang war:

BOY STABBED BY YOUNG FEUDISTS

Is Second Hurt †

> This is the second boy to receive serious injuries because of the feud which has been raging for the last three weeks between stone-throwing bands of boys who live in the vicinity of Fiftieth Street and Tenth Avenue. . . . Fifty or more boys have received injuries. . . . Not only are the lives of school children endangered but the size of the weapons used makes it perilous for adults to venture near during the battles. There are a half dozen bands in the neighborhood, and when any two of them meet there is a fight. The principal pastime, however, seems to be in a whole crowd attacking one or two boys who belong to another band.
>
> Teachers in the public schools and Sunday school teachers have joined in the demand that the Police Department give full protection against assault to all living in the vicinity. The fever for stone throwing seems to be spreading through all the territory between Ninth and Tenth Avenues between Fiftieth and Sixtieth Streets, and the situation is said to be beyond the control of the present force of police on duty in that part of the city.

Gang fighting is most prevalent when the nervous youngsters are just released from the school room and

* New York *Times*, June 26, 1911.

† New York *World*, February 24, 1910.

must inevitably encounter their schoolmate antagonists on the streets.

Here is an account of a gang fight, the events of which were described by one of the small marauders:

"Last night a gang of boys came down with their pockets full of brickbats, looking for Willie Harrigan, but Johnnie and Jimmie heard of it and got the gang together. I came up with my pockets full of stones and was throwing them when I got hit in the leg myself and it hurt so I couldn't throw. Just then three cops suddenly jumped off a car, right in the middle of the fight. Everybody beat it, but a cop grabbed me and I dropped my stones and jerked away and ran. They caught three of the others though, and took them to the station house. I don't know whether they got there. Every afternoon this gang comes down and tries to catch our fellows alone as they did with Willie. We fight with stones and bottles. No one has been very much hurt lately. One of our gang has a gun, too, but he can't fire it for fear of the cops."

These last sentences reveal, or at least refer to, the most repulsive of all the ways in which the demoralizing effect of West Side gang development is shown. Even a confirmed pessimist, if he has any sympathy with boys and any knowledge of their ways, can discern in the gang's activities a striving after the unattainable which is yet a birthright, an effort which is essentially more pathetic than vicious. In the raid and the "loot," the chase and the "hang-out," it is not difficult to mark the trail of the Redskin and the hunt and the lure of danger which is so dear to the heart of a boy. But even the most persistent of optimists, willing to make many allowances, must demur against

the coldblooded and treacherous methods to which the feuds and enmities of West Side gangs have reduced their members. If ever these boys had a sense of the spirit of fair play, they seem to have lost it completely. They win by planning overwhelming advantages. An attack upon three or four or even one defenseless boy by 30 or 40 merciless youngsters, who even attempt to surround their prey and strike from behind, is not a disgraceful thing to them but an exploit to be proud of. No mercy is shown to the vanquished. Stories are rife in the neighborhood of boys of thirteen or fourteen being attacked when alone and undefended, by 10 or more assailants from another street.

That casualties are not more frequent is due to the dominant spirit of cowardice with which the mob always taints its members. In the thick of the fight when no responsibility can be placed and every member feels secure in the presence of his friends, there is no atrocity which these boys will not attempt; but relying as they do on the strength of the mob instead of on individual strength, the first feeling of timidity immediately develops into a panic. An unexpected move by the enemy at bay will rout an attacking party of four times their strength. Half a dozen boys caught at a disadvantage will charge unscathed through a gang of nearly two score, who fly in all directions at this unexpected display of bravery. One boy, for instance, was recently beset by eight others when he was about to leave the factory. Instead of retreating as they expected, he suddenly seized a club, charged one wing of his assailants, and escaped unhurt. On the other hand, here is a case in which one of the victims was caught:

"Jim and me was goin' down the street, w'en about six fellers from the Fiftieth Street gang hot-footed after us. We ran but they got right close and hollered to us to halt. I made out like I was goin' to stop but got a fresh start w'en they slacked up and got away. Jim did stop and they near killed him, they beat him up so."

"Oh! They would-a killed me if they'd got me," said one boy, relating how he had been chased into a hallway by five or six of a rival gang, armed with bottles, clubs, and bricks. "I hid in a toilet, and when they came up to look in I rushed out on 'em and took 'em by surprise; I pushed one feller down the steps and beat it, but they didn't catch me." And a similar story was told by another. "After I wins in my fight with bot' Mike and his pal me little brother hears 'em telling one day how they was goin' to lay for me in the hallway wit clubs. I runs up tru de house next door on the roof tru de house where dey was goin' to lay for me and hides in the toilet wit a big club. When I hear Mike and his pal come in an' talkin' right near me I rushes out and bangs right an' left wit me club. I hits 'em bot' on de bean (head) an' dey runs out. After that they never bothered me."

Gang fighting, in fact, as practiced in this neighborhood, is conducive to neither manliness, honor, courage, nor self-respect. The strength of the boy is the strength of the gang, and under its protection unspeakable horrors take place for which it is impossible to place responsibility. Rumors of boys being stabbed, shot, clubbed, maimed, and even killed are current everywhere, and there is good reason to believe that many of them are true. Such things are, of course, never

mentioned to strangers, and residents learn of them only by chance conversation. The moment that any definite questions are asked, the boys become reticent and change the subject. But there can be no doubt that many crimes are committed in these blocks which never reach the ears of the police, and that a considerable proportion of them are due to the boy and his gang.

And so the word "gang" here has grown to be synonymous with the worst side of boy life, and the group itself, which might in other surroundings and under other traditions be a positive civic asset, simply adds the irresponsibility of the mob to the recklessness of youth and becomes a force which turns West Side boyhood into cowards and savages. As a priest of one of the Roman Catholic churches said the other day, "The social evil may be an important one, but *the* question in this neighborhood is that of the gangs."

CHAPTER V

HIS HOME

AMONG the influences which mold the destinies of the West Side boy one still remains to be mentioned. We have tried to sketch the characteristics of the community in which he finds himself and to indicate the causes and the traditions which have produced them. We have watched him in the daylight glare of his playground, and followed him through his games and the maneuvers of his gang. School, and in later years, the shop or factory, rarely work any appreciable change in his make-up. The former is usually treated by the class of boys with whom we are dealing as a long game between himself and the truant officer. The latter comes into his life too late and often too unsuitably to be regarded by him as anything but so many dreary years of necessary imprisonment. But back of his chequered little life on the docks and streets stand his mother and his tenement home, and surely it is to them, if anywhere, that we must look for the guidance that is to help him and the influence that is to counteract the wild persuasions of the playground.

Is this home attractive? Can it be? Does his mother understand her boy and his difficulties, even if she can cope with her own? If she does, how far can she help him? If she does not, how far is she blameworthy? What is her attitude toward the West Side problems? To what extent is she—can

she be—responsible for her children's conduct? How far right are the judges of the New York children's court, and how far wrong, in holding West Side parents responsible for the misdemeanors of their sons? Let us look at the home outside and within, visit the mother and hear her side of the story; for these are questions which must be asked and answered before our picture of the West Side boy is complete.

It would be impossible with any truth to call the tenement buildings externally attractive. Surrounding the factories on all sides, wedged between tall, noisy buildings, standing almost alone in a block of lumber and wagon yards, or sometimes occupying entire blocks to the exclusion of everything else, they rise singly, in groups, or in rows along the streets and avenues, ugly, monotonous, of an indistinguishable sameness. Most of them face squarely up to the sidewalk, with no areaway in front, behind them narrow cement-paved courts, round which the shabby walls rear themselves, cutting off sunlight and giving to each little well of air-space the gloominess of a cañon. Every type of obsolete dwelling, condemned by the building laws of a decade ago, is present in block lengths, teeming and seething with human life, and accepted with that philosophy of poverty which holds that such things are a part of the natural scheme which created Fifth Avenue for the man who doesn't have to work and Eleventh Avenue for the man who does. The "dumb-bell" and "railroad" types of tenement with dark inner rooms, first sanctioned by the laws of the late 70's but condemned as dangerous and unsanitary nearly a decade ago, predominate. These buildings were erected for the most part over

twenty-five years ago (some are forty years old or more), and in the ten years preceding 1911 only two modern tenements had been erected in the whole district. Most of the tenements so adjoin that the roofs of one are accessible from those on either side. Frequently this condition continues through the whole block, so that a marauder, a fleeing small boy, or a fugitive from justice, may dodge up one stairway, cross several roofs, and descend by another. Similarly, if one street door is locked, the tenement can usually be entered from the adjoining building by way of the roof.

Inside, the tenements offer a depressing study in bad housing conditions. The hall is dark, the stairway small and ill-lighted; modern toilet and sanitary facilities in many cases are absent. The rooms are often infested with mice, roaches, and bed-bugs. The slender airshaft is frequently so inaccessible that refuse and rubbish thrown into it from adjacent windows may lie for months in a rotting accumulation at the bottom. A large proportion of the families are herded in flats containing from two to four rooms, which are very small and receive a minimum of light and air from their few and often overshadowed windows.

The number of rooms occupied by 200 of these families, as shown by the table given in the Appendix,* is to some extent misleading, for the rooms are often not really separate. Owing to restrictions of space there are rarely doors between the rooms in the prevailing type of tenements; only doorways; and whether these are hung with curtains or not, privacy within the home is naturally almost impossible. Family quarrels

* See Appendix, Table 6, p. 169.

or Saturday night's drunken brawl too often take place in the presence of the children. Moreover, walls are so thin that every word spoken above an ordinary tone of voice is plainly audible through them to the inmates of the next flat. A social worker who was for a time resident here said recently: "In the first part of this month there were three cases of wife-beating in one tenement alone. This tenement is of so-called 'model' construction, has an exceptionally high rent, attempts to restrict crowding, and prides itself on an extra high grade of tenants. Yet the quarreling and brawling between husband and wife in all parts of the building seem to be incessant. It even breaks the sleep of the children and other tenants in the early hours of the morning."

In homes like these it is scarcely possible for even the smallest families to live in decency. But small families are not the rule on the West Side. Of the 231 families for which information regarding the number of living children was secured, 163, or 71 per cent, had four or more children. Families having five children formed the largest group; and one family had 11 living children.*

Day begins for the housewife at 6 o'clock, or even earlier if she works outside the home, and ordinarily her children are up and on the streets by half past seven. For breakfast she usually prepares a quantity of food and leaves it at the disposal of the family. The members, as they rise, successively go to the kitchen and help themselves. The workers go to the stores and factories, and the children to school or the streets. By

* For further data regarding size of families, see Appendix, Table 7, p. 170.

half past seven the factories are in full operation, the stores are open, and the day's work has begun. From half past eight to nine, the streets are thronged with children going to school, or sometimes to steal a riotous holiday on the streets and docks as truants. At noon they return to snatch a hasty lunch served in the same impromptu way as breakfast, and then the woman is left alone again to wash and cook and mend and gossip till supper time, if she is not one of the many West Side mothers who must go out to earn.* In that case, the household tasks must be done after she returns home at night.

Such is the average tenement home, abiding place of our West Side boy and his family. In a very large number of cases the family is a "broken" one.†

As regards ambitions and ideals, the word "home" may stand for anything from the thrifty German household with its level head for the budget to a down-at-the-heels, loose-hinged group of people who share the same abiding place, but scarcely claim the name of family. Of course, it must be remembered that this is a neighborhood from which the sturdiest, those having the lucky combination of prosperity, vigor, and ambition, have pulled away. They have shaken clear both from the ill-repaired and inconvenient houses and from the district's reputation for "toughness." Here and there a fairly well-to-do family has been held by the ownership of a business or a house,

* For economic status of the mothers in 222 of the 241 families of delinquent boys, see Appendix, Table 8, p. 170. See also Anthony, op. cit., p. 59.

† The conjugal condition of the parents in 233 families is shown in the Appendix, Table 9, p. 171. For eight of the group of 241 families this information was not available.

or because to be a power even in a block like one of these is more satisfying than to be second elsewhere. Others have stayed from inertia, shaking their heads over lax West Side customs, but on the whole accepting them with the acquiescence of habit; and naturally, on the level of the neighborhood, they have entered into its life and made their friends here. They will drift back after brief outward excursions, from sheer loneliness. But most commonly the people here are too strongly fettered to break loose; they are bound to these dreary surroundings for their lives.

Practically every family has rubbed elbows with poverty too familiar for comment,* or seen it close at hand among the neighbors in the house and the children who play with their own on the street. In many families poverty is a basic condition underlying their many catastrophes and the whole tenure of their unstable fortunes. Often the budget simply cannot be stretched by any system of economy to cover the requisites for healthy and sturdy growth. Such requisites become luxuries, too extravagant for many a child. Teeth and eyes go uncared for, nourishment is inadequate, and misbehavior may easily spring in the wake of this negligence; often it does. For none of these children is good air obtainable except in short intervals. And very closely associated with the moral indifference of many an adolescent boy are the noise and overcrowding within his own home to which he is accustomed from babyhood. Sleep in a stuffy, dark bedroom, with two or three other occupants, has a

* The relief records of 86 families who were known to have received aid, and the duration of the relief records in 73 of these cases, are given in the Appendix, Tables 10 and 11, pp. 171 and 172.

telling effect both on mind and body, and never from morning to night are these tenements quiet. At the very outset poverty destroys the possibilities of normal development. The tenement child runs his race, but it is always a handicap.

Facing these harsh circumstances is a set of women who, though intimacy reveals among them varied dispositions and abilities, have yet developed out of the common experience many of the same ideas and lines of action. To their share falls the heaviest responsibility for the discipline and training of the children. The father is in the background and may be used as a court of appeal. Or perhaps he is to be guarded against,—another source of anxiety to the mother, who assumes the difficult role of "standing between." Among the more intelligent families he usually has a decisive voice in important questions as to school or work, and frequently he is the stricter parent, and carries more authority. But the day-in and day-out management and care is the woman's. These mothers of the tenements are confronted by the same problems, and they conform to certain types which it is not difficult to recognize.

Very familiar is the figure of the well-meaning woman who has kept her own decency, not without a struggle, but has proved hopelessly ineffective as a mother. She is usually ill-equipped to conceive or enter into the feelings of an imperious, self-absorbed, and overstimulated youngster. Her very decency has often forced her into a dull routine with a gray, colorless outlook, out of sympathy with youth that refuses to accept the shadows of her own overworked and saddened lot. Many of these women came from

Ireland as mere girls, alone or "brought by a friend," to go into the drudgery of living out. Their working days began in childhood. Mrs. Macy drew her own picture: Herself a child of twelve, she started out to "mind" children. "I had a little hat wi' daisies all roun' the brim an' ribbons hangin' off the back with daisies fastened on, and with one hand I was hangin' on to a hunk of m'lasses candy. I sure was childish lookin' help but I held the job for six years." Then came the marriage "to get a home of my own," followed by those terrible first years of bitter disillusionment and wretchedness. "He'd leave me alone in the house of an evening—I'd never been used to that. I was frightened, an' I'd cry." Soon child came after child, probably with a quota early given to death, and with those who lived arose the problem of their rearing.

Almost at once the women are awakened to the menace of the streets which become their common enemy. "To keep the boy off the streets" is the phrase everywhere repeated, pitiful in its futility. For every contrivance or device is useless once the boy has responded to their lure. The "fixed up" parlor with its lavishness of staring rugs and curtains, its piano, the symbol of many an hour's toil and ambition, or its phonograph, is exhibited by the mother with much satisfaction. Yet it crops out that in spite of these attractions Willie does not stay at home, and that only for severe punishment is he "kept up." Or, where restriction is tried, a boy makes use of every sort of subterfuge in order to escape. An errand, a visit to a boy's house, a club, even church, are the

alleged destinations which really serve as a pathway to the "hang-out" of the gang.

If such competition with the street is futile when the family is comparatively well-to-do, what chance has the mother with no such attractions at hand? Her home consists of three or four dark, stuffy rooms, destitute of carpet, or perhaps with a frayed strip or two, and a meager allowance of shabby furniture. There is no space for a separate parlor. The evening meal, the one family event, is eaten in the kitchen, perhaps in cramped quarters where each one takes his turn for a chair. The very conditions which her own standards impose, the fact that she "does not bother with such like in this house," has "no time for comp'ny," or "never set foot in one o' them silly shows," cut her off completely from comprehending the excitement and charm of the streets to which her children yield so eagerly.

Some of these women have carried for years the burden of a shiftless husband. With dumb patience they accept their lot—there is always the fact that "four or five dollars is better than none, an' it means a lot to me on the rent." And when even this help is lacking, it may be "he did used t' be a good man t' me an' in his day he's worked hard in the slaughter house. He sez I'd be pretty mean t' turn him out after all these years. He can't last much longer, an' it's hard t' know what's right. Most every night he comes up here done. We have to laugh at him a good deal an' so manage t' get along." A pretty grim kind of humor, this. In such cases it is well if the man is no longer there. Sometimes the wife has mustered all her power of decision and made the

effort to eject a chronic loafer from the home. "I talked and I talked for years," said Mrs. McCarthy, "an' he thought I wouldn't do nothin'. I couldn't put him away, but I got the judge t' make him keep out of my home. 'Don't you never bother this woman,' he sez. I had got to hate him so I couldn't stand it to look at him when I heard him come down the hall to the door an' me standin' there over me irons and me tub."

The bitter lesson of endurance so well learned, familiar as second nature, is repeated again and again with sons who are too lazy to work and depend upon the mother's earnings for what thay cannot get by gambling or stealing. Often her force is spent. She is weak, querulous, discouraged. To expect her to stem the tide of outside forces which are molding the boy into the nerveless or vicious man his father was before him is to ask the utterly impossible. Perhaps she will close her eyes, like Mrs. Gates, whose only son has joined a gang of sneak thieves but who maintains that "Jimmy is a good boy and never was no trouble to me." In her heart she knows there is something amiss, but she turns a deaf ear to any hint of wrongdoing. Sometimes the mother admits everything, enlarging and complaining, but at the end sits weakly back. "What can I do? What th' b'ys does outside they don't bes aifter tellin' inside, an' I can't be keepin' tracks on thim all th' toime."

In the judgment of such mothers a boy's good nature makes up for serious dereliction. A fellow who is thoroughly "in wid de push," according to her is "just wild like, not bad. He's thot obliging and does onything I ask about the house." Many a slip is

Approaching the "Gopher" Age

One Diversion of the Older Boys

forgiven a stalwart fellow by the woman who is feeding and clothing him if he brings in her coal, puts up a curtain, and does not "answer back." So great in their lives is the dearth of common kindliness. When he takes to his heels, she confesses to "feelin' kind o' lonely without Dan around," and nine times out of ten she welcomes him back when his spell of wandering is over.

Too often, however, this good feeling is absent and active antagonism and bickering marks the spirit of the place called "home." The mother who from "feelin' it her duty to talk to 'em though they don't pay no heed" degenerates into the "nagger," and so has taken the fatal step which makes impossible anything like affection or harmony between her and the boy. The result is always the same: the sullen fellow slouching before the querulous, upbraiding parent, resentful in every line, ready to jerk away snarling, or to flash out in a pitched battle of tempers, leaving behind bitterness, misunderstanding and anger. Sometimes this shipwreck is accepted with a Spartan quiescence; lifelong experience forces these women for mere self-preservation into an endurance grown easier than revolt. Yet the suffering is great, and these mothers, inadequate and weak as they are, form one of the most pitiful chapters in the story of juvenile delinquency.

But there is the woman, here as everywhere, who refuses to fold her hands, who is alert and decisive. She is not likely to be found in homes where the most stringent pressure of want or overwork is felt. Yet she is not of necessity the best educated or most refined. She is always shrewd, with a keen perception of the

boy's side of the story, but also with a very clear and determined perception of her own. Very likely she was born and brought up within a few blocks of her present home. But the experiences of her own childhood form no parallel to those of this generation. In her day everything to the west of Tenth Avenue was open playgrounds; truant officers were unknown, and an arrest was a thing to be spoken of in whispers. Still she has grown up with the district and has listened to the current gossip. Her first axiom is that no knowledge of a boy's doings will come amiss; her second, that such information cannot be expected from the boy himself. Even among the best of women a system of spying is carried on, although the wisest do not make this apparent unless occasion demands, but quietly "keep an eye on that boy." It may be a strong motive for staying in an undesirable block that "If we go, James 'll just be back here an' then he'll be out from under me." They understand the fallacy of moving to separate a boy from bad company, unless one can go to a suburb, from which there are difficulties in the way of transportation to the West Side. When conversation among the boys can be overheard they "take occasion to listen." "I don't go out very much but I've me ways o' findin' out," says Mrs. Moran, "an' they know they can't fool me."

The amount of credit to give to tale bearing and complaints is a question to puzzle the shrewdest. It is an important source of information, yet "you can't believe everything you hear." The irate complainant who fails to get the expected warmth of support from maternal authority needs to realize that the life of the West Side boy is one continuous fracas with the land-

lord, the janitress, the corner grocery man, the "Ginnie" paper dealer, and the "cop." Complaints come to the mother from all sides and are often unfounded. "I had him up in the house for playin' hookey, an' I watched them fellows crookin' the bolognie off the cart myself, or I might a' thought it was him." Moreover, it is understood that a boy has a right to expect a certain amount of support from his mother. Her defense is natural, but she cannot carry it too far or a boy may lose all fear of restraint at home. One mother told of hearing a youngster boast, "Aw—g'wan—tell my mother—she don't care what I do." "And that hurts," she said with emphasis, "fer a boy to give his own mother a name like that."

Altogether "it's no easy matter bringin' up a boy in New York." Truancy and cigarettes are issues on which many a judicious woman must confess defeat. She knows that surface evidence is not to be taken. The appearance of a boy at the proper hours with his books does not prove that they have not been "kept" in a candy store while the youngster had an eye on the time. Smoking is still harder to regulate, and though a youngster "don't dare to do it in the house" few women feel sure as to what happens outside. One confessed to avoiding the issue. "I knew he was smoking a long time—smelt it—but I never let on. I thought he'd do it open if I did and do it more." Amusements which can safely be sanctioned are hard to find. Pigeon flying almost always is frowned upon for fear of accidents on the roofs and because "them pigeons are the ruination of b'ys, keepin' them out o' school, an' into the comp'ny of them big toughs as has 'em." Every shade of opinion

is expressed in regard to the "nickel dumps," as the moving picture shows are called. Some believe that "them places is the worst thing that ever happened to New York, settin' b'ys to gamblin' and stealin'." Others set upon them the seal of approval. "A b'y's got t' do somethin' an' I don't see no harm in a good show that keeps him off the streets."

It goes without saying that these families have no very large sums of money to give their children, but the wisdom of allowing a boy some spending money is recognized. It is, in fact, far more essential than in most communities, for here almost everything desirable must be paid for, from carfare to a ball ground to the highly coveted coin for a nickel show. Money is usually given to school boys in small quantities and for definite things. "If he gets a quarter a week, he doesn't get it all at once." And the boy must show that it was spent as intended. With the boy who is working, the amount he contributes to the household is an important basis of judgment on his character. If he works regularly and hands over his envelope, he may still have peccadilloes, but his main duties are accomplished. If, on the other hand, he is "wise" and "deep," he will lie as to what he is earning and keep more than is thought to be his due. Or, all too often, he will scorn work altogether and his mother will be known to "have had bad luck with that boy." The outsider often expresses pity for the child who must hand over the bulk of his meager earnings. But the moral sentiment of the neighborhood insists upon this duty, and with good reason, for the rearing of children is indeed no easy matter here, even when it has not gone much further than supplying necessities. Often the

price paid in weariness, pain, and ill-health has been sore, and the slight help that the child can contribute after the long years of waiting is the father's or mother's due.

Nevertheless, when a boy reaches working age, some allowance from his earnings is his by right, and it is this fact which adds to his desire to leave school early. During the first year, when the wage ranges from $3.50 to $5.00 a week, an allowance of 50 cents seems to be general. Occasionally, 25 cents is considered enough, but this is generally felt to be "stingy." At the same time, "it is not for a boy's good havin' too much in his hands." Sometimes he has $1.00 a week and buys his own clothes. Lunch money and carfares to work are, of course, allowed extra. Tips are generally accorded to be his own; it is a mark of high virtue to surrender them. A woman will tell with pride, "He knew I was hard up and he gave me his tips." Occasionally a mother dislikes to have her son working in a place where he is tipped, because it is then impossible to know how much money is rightfully his. He can account very easily for the possession of a surplus. The amount a boy is spending is always a matter on which a canny mother "has her eye." Any doubt brings the sharp question, "Now, where did you get the money for that?" If he is unduly "flush" he is on the borderline of danger, and her suspicions are keen. She knows that the temptation to petty theft is constant. As his wages rise his spending money increases, and if he still lives at home at the age of eighteen or nineteen he usually ceases to hand over his earnings but pays for his board. With this increased independence comes a

general feeling that the time of subservience is passing and that "you can't say much to a boy of that age."

On the whole, this type of mother is lenient and broadminded, realizing that "you can't keep a boy tied to your apron strings," and too sensible to set up any impossible standards. But the wisest of them know—and rare and valuable, indeed, is such wisdom—that once a boy has passed the boundary line, punishment must be meted out in no faltering or indecisive way. "He don't dare do that, he knows he won't be let," spoken with a certain emphasis, carries weight, and lucky is the boy who with consistency and firmness "is not let." But on the West Side such discipline is not common.

Many of the mothers reflect the average opinions of the neighborhood. They are rough-and-ready Irish women who give themselves no airs and "don't pretend to be better than the people they was raised with"; women with a coarse and hearty good nature, easy-going standards, and, if occasion demands, a good assertive tongue. As a rule, the burden of discipline sits easily on their shoulders. "Oi juist drrive thim out—th' whole raft o' thim," says Mrs. Haggerty, blessed with eight children and four rooms. "Oi can't be bothered with th' noise o' thim, Oi'm that nearvous." These women are not necessarily "a bad lot" as the district goes, but neither are they over-particular. If a boy has no complaints from school, or has held his job and managed to keep out of the hands of the "cop" for the last few months, "he's a good b'ye," and any "wildness" in his past can be excused and forgotten. On the other hand, if he has happened to give "trrouble," the chance visitor is likely to hear the tale from A to Z

and, if the youngster has had the bad luck to be present, with a good, round scolding for him thrown in.

There is little delicacy or finesse about this discipline; it is of the hammer and tongs variety. In the vast majority of these homes, even those of higher type, the emotions rule at one moment with cuff and shout, at the next with a caress or a laugh. No consistency is maintained, and the clever youngster soon learns by the signs when to duck and when to "clear out," just as a little later he learns the earmarks of the "dinny" and knows when to "cheese it." There is a constant piling up of threats which mean nothing. When Joseph boasts of his gang and their glories, "What, are youse fightin' with that crew?" Mrs. Dooley raps out. "You just better not let me catch you or you'll get all that's comin' to youse." But she can back him up as hotly and unreasonably as she berates him, and the ill-starred policeman who comes beneath the onslaught of her tongue and within the range of her invective will find discretion the better part of valor and do well to hold his peace.

But most tragic and helpless of all is the mother who has gone down before the vicissitudes of her life. She belongs to the scum of our cities, accorded no respect and scant pity, only the scorn of her more "decent" neighbor of the tenements. She may still be holding her family together, but is almost always weak and enervated. Their unkempt and wretched quarters, their nomadic wanderings from house to house and block to block, reflect her own failure. The father may be the "better of the two," but without her aid he is almost always incapable of keeping their heads far above water. Often he is another of her kind, and both have become the

victims of their own habits. Suspicion and surliness may well be expected from such a family, for they have often much to fear.

Yet it may be that even such a woman as Mrs. Catesby, in her three barren rooms at the top of a rear tenement shack on one of the far river blocks, will receive you without questioning your right to enter and to share her confidence. Perhaps it is a latent desire for human intercourse, perhaps merely the spirit of simple courtesy, so universal among the women of the tenements. She is a slatternly little figure, dressed in a shabby black waist that scarcely covers her, with a tangle of frizzled red hair slipping over her face and held in tether by an odd hairpin or two. Her cheeks are pink, though the skin is loose and flabby, and her eyes are watery but clear and blue. An empty whiskey bottle on the table is a needless index to the chief interest of her sordid life. But although she may not share your opinions, which in her life have proved mere extra weight and have gone overboard as valueless, she is nevertheless very well aware of them. It is harsh to term her effort to play up to your standards deception; perhaps it is a genuine remnant of more decent aspirations. "If company comes it's then I'm bound not to be clean. Now, don't you look at the dirt in this house." The dirt is of long standing, but conventions are appeased.

The picture of her life, her husband, and her children, which the woman paints for you, is colored for your benefit, and is not to be taken at its face value. There are plenty of evasions and falsehoods. Yet the poor shams which she raises to shield herself from your criticism are pitifully weak defenses through which may

easily be caught many an illuminating glimpse of the dingy realities behind. Nor is her confidence difficult to gain, once your claim to friendliness is established. "Yes, once I was down to that children's court. I was that frightened they'd take the children off. They was only ten an' eight when they come in one day, Jenny an' Paul, with a man I'd never seed before. 'Good day,' says he, 'you're Mrs. Catesby?' 'I am,' says I, 'but I've never had the pleasure.' 'No,' says he, 'I'm from the Gerries, and I've come for the children. They'll have to come along with me.' I was that upset I a'most fainted an' I was all shaky like. Well, I went out to call papa,—he had work that day,—an' when we come back, he'd took them clear off just like they was. He'd even left their little caps, an' there they was, layin' on the table. There'd been a complaint, I found out, yes, a complaint about how papa was drinkin' too much, but we got 'em back all right. Wouldn't it been awful if they'd been took!"

Sometimes the family is broken up, the children are carried away, and the parents left to drink out the rest of their lives as they will. To remove the children may seem high-handed and brutal, but the reverse picture—the family left to vent its weakness and its vice on the plastic children in its care—is surely a worse alternative. Some of these women are known as "harborers." They send the youngsters out to beg, and wink at their pilfering if they do no worse. School in their eyes, as in the boys', is an unnecessary regulation and enforced by an arbitrary society. Evasion of law is part of their code, quite as much as is the "working" of any organization or church, which is legitimate prey if there is something to be gained. Beyond the calls upon their

children to gather coal and wood and to mind babies there are few restrictions. "Lord, I can't be aifter botherin' me heads over thim, lady, they do be off somewheres an' ye can thrust thim younguns to take care o' thimselves." And take care of themselves they do, and quite effectually, until they have the bad luck to run foul of the police. Even then it is probably no very serious matter till Tommy gets to be an old offender. His mother at least is not worried about the condition of his morals, and can be counted on to give the most glowing character to "the Gerry man." What need to fear the streets for him? Surely they can furnish him few sights more sordid and more impressive to his childish imagination and prematurely sharpened mind than those with which he has grown intimate within the walls of his "home."

Truly they have a hard life, these West Side tenement mothers, and though many fail and many despair, from first to last the majority make a brave fight of it. When one is born to the lowest rung of the ladder and lives among people who seldom aspire beyond, existence becomes a difficult matter. How can the boy's home be attractive when there is scarcely room to turn round in it, the family is large, and when year in and year out his mother is merely a drudge? How can his mother, under such conditions, hope to make the home rival the ever-changing lure of the streets? What time and mental energy can she give to her children separately, when she is struggling from morning till night to clothe and feed them? Is the child, produced as he is, so much her fault? Is he not much more a product of a situation for which her responsibility is small?

Home conditions, the tension of constant quarreling,

Replenishing the Wood Box

A Rich Find

broken sleep, fear, hatred, and excitement, combine to break down the nervous constitution of the child before it gets a fair start. Little is known or cared about infant nutrition; there is no time to bother over such things. In many families not even once a day is there a regular meal or meal time. Father and children eat the same food, and the boy is accustomed to the stimulus of tea and coffee from childhood. Sugar comes from the grocery fairly clogged with flour. The coffee contains barley and other cheap ingredients. Cheap jellies and condiments poison him with their acids and coloring materials. The owners of delicatessen stores say in defense that it is not worth while to keep the higher grade brands for the neighborhood will not pay the few necessary cents extra to secure them. A storekeeper recently advertised a keg of cider for sale at one cent a glass. When asked for his reason, he said that the cider was so spoiled that nobody but the children would buy it. While he was making this explanation two small boys came in; one gave his penny to the storekeeper and received a glass of cider which he shared with his mate. Often the home food is not sufficient, and it is not at all uncommon for a boy to pick up at least one meal a day in the streets, leaving the house at noon and not returning till late at night. Crushed fruit and stale cakes and rolls are sold to children at half price, and the stalls provide candy which, like the staple foods of this neighborhood, is usually adulterated. But the boys care for quantity rather than quality. The mixture of glue, glucose, aniline dyes, and coarse flour which they eat would upset the digestion of children far better nourished than they, and most adults find it impossible to drink the soda water flavored with cheap

compounds which is sold on the streets. It is scarcely to be wondered at that boyhood on the Middle West Side is physically and morally subnormal; and it can scarcely be contended that West Side motherhood is greatly to blame for it.

If there is cause for wonder at the results of the home life of these tenements, it is wonder that parents do not give up more often. For here indeed it does seem that "the struggle naught availeth." Perhaps they do not know how to give up. Their ethical sense, even their sense of life itself, is dulled or deadened by the hopelessness and squalor around them. The father's struggle to meet the rent, provide food and occasional clothes for the family, and still leave enough for the hour or two at the saloon, which is often his only recreation; the mother's pitiful, incessant effort to keep her dingy tenement habitable and her family together; to make one penny buy the groceries of two; and withal to keep up to some slight extent a decent appearance,—these things have left scant time or energy for attention to the moral needs of the children. So long accustomed to the dangers of the streets, to the open flaunting of vice, drunkenness, and gambling on all sides, they do not take into account the impressions which these conditions are making upon young minds, now and with ever-growing inquisitiveness seeking information and experimenting on all manner of things which come within their ken. Their very poverty itself aids in dimming the moral sense. Mothers frankly say they have no room for their children in the house, and it is nearly always true. They are between the devil and the deep sea. Physical and moral conditions in the home are bad for the boy; the street gives him more

light and air but is more dangerously immoral. In the face of so many apparently insoluble difficulties is it surprising that the parents' attitude is bewildered and discouraged?

From the midst of this squalid and disjointed home life one fact emerges—that the recreation of the West Side boy lies beyond the power of the family. To look to such homes as those of this district to counteract the tremendous forces that play upon him outside is as unreasonable as it is useless. Wretched as it is, the tenement home has an influence, usually vaguely restrictive, and in a few cases wise enough and strong enough to help a boy who is "steadying down" and "getting sensible"; but this influence can rarely bear the strain of competition with the pull of the street and the gang. And so it happens that one type of mother —most pitiful because so near to efficient motherhood and yet so far from it—is perhaps the saddest of them all; the type that is fully alive to her son's dangers, but realizes that it is impossible for her to cope with them.

Let us repeat, it is the inadequacy of the tenement home that is the greatest curse of these blocks. Its lack of space for storage helps to force uneconomical marketing; its lack of size and equipment drives the boy to the street. The mother is compelled to become her own boy's worst enemy. She would gladly keep him off the streets, but the very conditions of her drudgery force him to them, and cut her off from the sympathy which she knows she cannot show him. Of course, the picture is not totally unrelieved. East of the tenements are the brownstone houses, and both here and in other parts of the district there are families which form exceptions of kindliness and comparative success

in dealing with the problem of living. But by far the most of our boys would recognize their own homes and mothers in these pages. Dirt, frowsiness, dissoluteness, darkness, and rags—these are too often known to him from infancy. In the far West Side, home seems to be the one place which the children desire to keep away from.

CHAPTER VI

THE BOY AND THE COURT

[This investigation was made in 1909–10. Since that time great progress has been made in the children's court of Manhattan. The failure of the kind of treatment described in Sections II and III of this chapter has been recognized by the court and a great step forward has been taken in the reorganization of its probation work. A number of improvements give evidence of a genuine and growing desire to make the work of the court more thorough and humane. These and other modifications will be noted in detail by footnotes in the following pages.

The description of court procedure here given is therefore to be read with the fact always in mind that the conditions described are those of several years ago. The account has been included because the material relating to the court, while partly out of date, is inextricably interwoven with the material describing neighborhood conditions which are practically unchanged. The improvements in the children's court have not yet had time to seriously affect the district.

A further reason for including some statements regarding partly outgrown court conditions here is that they are not wholly outgrown in other cities. There are still children's courts in other places which have no special children's judge, where parole is used instead of probation, and where the records are entirely inadequate.]

THE foregoing chapters have reviewed the situation back of the boy's delinquency and have shown that his difficulties are deeply rooted in the whole neighborhood life of the Middle West Side. It cannot be denied that the courts are a necessary instrument in the handling of such lawlessness as we have found to be characteristic of our tenement neighborhood. But it must also be admitted that the unsupplemented efforts of a court of law, however humane its methods,

cannot be the ultimate answer to our question of what to do with the West Side boy.

From the point of view of the neighborhood the children's court takes its place among the various forces which influence him as wholly foreign. In the first place, the point of view of the tribunal is strange to his little savage mind. The judge is a sort of Setebos whom the little Caliban, sprawling in his West Side mire, both fears and scorns. In the second place, the court building itself is far from the district and beyond the range of his familiar haunts. After the boy is arrested, he is taken to the children's court by way of the detention rooms of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. In his own estimation he has made a notable journey by the time he reaches the court. His parents, too, view the trip to court as a considerable journey, which involves putting on their best clothes and the spending of carfare. It may also mean the loss of a day's work and the possible loss of a job.

In order to make clear the experience of the boy in the court, at this point we must give a brief description of the growth, equipment, and processes of the Manhattan Children's Court and its allied agencies. Later we shall examine some of the tangible results of this treatment in individual cases from the West Side neighborhood.

As a first essential to an understanding of the causes of arrest and the methods of the court, we must know the legal definition of juvenile delinquency. Chapter 478 of the Laws of 1909 provided that "a child of more than seven and less than sixteen years of age, who shall commit any act or omission which, if committed by an adult, would be a crime not punishable by death or life imprisonment, shall not be deemed guilty of any crime,

but of juvenile delinquency only."* The offenses, however, are still registered in the court according to the law violated. The clauses under which charges are most frequently made are given below. The number of the paragraph in the Penal Law containing the full text of the law is given in each case.

Sec. 486 Penal Law
- a. Improper guardianship (peculiar in that the child was arraigned for the offense of his guardians).
- b. Disorderly or ungovernable child (on complaint of parents or guardian).

Sec. 720 Penal Law
"Any person who shall by an offensive or disorderly act or language, annoy or interfere with any person in any place or with the passengers of any public stage, railroad car, ferry boat, or other public conveyance, . . . shall be guilty of a misdemeanor."

Sec. 43 Penal Law
A person who commits "any act which seriously injures the person or property of another, or which seriously disturbs or endangers the public peace or health, or which openly outrages public decency, for which no other punishment is expressly prescribed by this chapter, is guilty of a misdemeanor."

Sec. 1310 Penal Law
- a. Petty Larceny.
- b. Grand Larceny.

Sec. 405 Penal Law
Burglary and Unlawful Entry.

Sec. 242 Penal Law
Assault.

Sec. 1610 Penal Law
Peddling without License.

Sec. 1990 Penal Law
"Riding on freight trains; boarding cars in motion; obstructing passage of car."

Sec. 2120
Robbery.

Besides the violations of the penal law, violations of

* For the full text of the law referred to, see Consolidated Laws of New York; the Penal Law; Laws of 1909, section 2186, chapter 88.

the compulsory education law and of the child labor law are frequently the ground of complaint.

The list of offenses with which our special group of 294 boys was charged agrees in the main with those given above. The list of court charges* according to the number of arrests for each is given herewith for the whole group of 463 arrests.

OFFENSES IN 463 CASES OF ARREST CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO COURT CHARGES

Violation of compulsory education law	29
Improper guardianship	60
(According to Penal Law, Sec. 486.)	
Ungovernable child	12
Disorderly child	4
Violation of child labor law	10
In danger of being morally depraved	1
Disorderly conduct	186
(According to Penal Law, Sec. 720.)	
Injury or destruction to property	15
Injuring railroad and appurtenances	1
Petty larceny	43
(According to Penal Law, Sec. 1298.)	
Grand larceny	12
(According to Penal Law, Sec. 1296.)	
Robbery	5
(According to Penal Law, Sec. 2124)	
Burglary	38
(According to Penal Law, Sec. 404.)	
Riding on freight train	3
(According to Penal Law, Sec. 1990.)	
Assault	15
(According to Penal Law, Sec. 242-246.)	
Unknown	31
	465
Deducting duplicates†	2
Total	463

* Compare with classification of arrests according to analysis of offenses made in the Bureau of Social Research, as given in Chapter II, pp. 16–17.

† There were two cases in which an arrest was made on more than one charge.

A Ball Game Near the Docks

"Obstructing Traffic" on Twelfth Avenue

As early as 1892, a law was passed permitting the separate trial of children in New York City, but it was not until September, 1902, that a separate court was established in Manhattan in a building of its own at the corner of Third Avenue and Eleventh Street.* The children's court, including all those sitting in the various boroughs of Greater New York, is called the Children's Part of the Court of Special Sessions. The court sits daily until the calendar is cleared.† The cases before the court had to be rushed through with great speed. In 1909, over 11,000 cases were handled by the Manhattan court. This allowed the judge an average of five minutes for a trial, including the most serious and perplexing.‡

The court building, which was once the headquarters of the Department of Corrections, has long been congested, inconvenient, dingy, and unsanitary.§ The

* Separate courts were established in Brooklyn in September, 1903; in the boroughs of Queens and Richmond in September, 1910; and in the county of the Bronx in January, 1914.

† Until recently the judges of Special Sessions sat in rotation in the children's court. The disadvantages of this system, under which it was seldom possible for the judge who had first passed upon a case to follow it to its conclusion, led in 1912 to some modifications in the direction of more permanent assignments of children's court judges. Further improvements were made in 1913. Four judges of the Court of Special Sessions were designated as children's court judges, and they constitute a committee on children's courts. For the greater part of the year one judge sits in the children's court in Manhattan, another in the court of Brooklyn, and since January, 1914, a third sits on different days of the week in the courts in Queens, Richmond, and the Bronx. The fourth is chairman of the committee and sits about three months in the year in each court. This new arrangement minimizes rotation in office and permits specialization.

‡ This has been completely changed since a special judge was assigned to the court. When he is sitting, frequently one and a half hours will be given to one case alone and there is rarely a day when there are not two sessions, morning and afternoon. Sometimes the Manhattan court does not adjourn until 7 p. m.

§ A modern court building is now in process of erection in East Twenty-second Street, between Lexington and Third Avenues.

room where the hearing is given is always crowded and noisy.

An account of the court's equipment is incomplete without a word in regard to the detention quarters set aside in its own building by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. The detention home, with dormitories and dining rooms, is given rent free. The total expense of caring for the children temporarily in the care of the society in 1909 amounted to something over $20,000.* The total amount spent by the city for court service in handling over 11,000 cases in 1909 was $56,012.15. This averages $5.00 less per capita than any other large city in the country.

The development of a probation system for juvenile delinquents was of very slow growth in New York City. The first probation law in New York state was passed in 1901, but children under sixteen were excluded through the efforts of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.† In 1903, a compromise was made which permitted the appointment of an official probation staff. Until the series of adjustments and improvements recommended by the reports of the Page Commission‡ in April, 1910, was begun, the agents of the Society

* The New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (Incorporated). Thirty-fifth Annual Report, Dec. 31, 1909, p. 17.

† "As prepared by the New York Prison Association, the bill was applicable to both children and adults, but owing to the active opposition of the New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, it was amended in the legislature so as to apply only to persons over sixteen years of age. It was claimed by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children that existing laws made adequate provision for the treatment of delinquent children." Report of the Probation Commission of the State of New York, 1906, pp. 8 and 9.

‡ Commission to Inquire into the Courts of Inferior Criminal Jurisdiction in Cities of the First Class. Final Reports. New York Assembly Documents, 133rd Session, 1910, Vol. 26, No. 54.

for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children and the volunteer probation societies did the only work approaching probation in nature.* The court process, however, was not probation, but parole, though until recently the words were used as synonymous in the court. "At the end of the period of parole, sentence is suspended if the child has done well," wrote Mr. Homer Folks. "The term 'parole' as used in this court signifies practically an adjournment of the case. The oversight of the children on parole is not clearly separated from the work of the agents of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children."†

Very early in the history of the court private efforts were made to help the many children who, it was felt, were not receiving adequate attention. The impulse to reform and save the child, being largely moral, naturally originated in the churches. The result was a division of volunteer probation along church lines which left its impress on the later developments of probation work.

In Manhattan the first to enter the field were the Catholics. The Catholic Probation League, incorporated February 3, 1907, under the auspices of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, was the appropriate sponsor for the movement. The pioneer work had already been done, however, by a small group of women known as the Catholic Ladies' Committee. After the formation of the Probation League, its parole committee co-operated with the ladies' committee by taking over the cases of the older boys. The committee took all the girls'

* Changes made in 1913 have been discussed on p. 87.

† Folks, Homer: Juvenile Probation in New York. *The Survey*, xxiii: pp. 671-672. (Feb. 5, 1910).

cases and gave them especial attention. The members themselves did the visiting, and at one time maintained a paid worker. Some of them favored the establishment of an official probation staff. They thought that the willingness of volunteer agencies to shoulder the entire burden was delaying this important move.

The Jewish Protectory and Aid Society had for several years engaged in parole and probation work to a certain extent. The society maintained a paid worker who represented its legal authority as guardian of all Jewish juvenile delinquents in the city and who was made a special officer by the police commissioner. Until the recent establishment of the Jewish Big Brother movement he bore the brunt of all the visiting of Jewish cases, and handled as best he could all the cases passing through the court or paroled from the Hawthorne School.

Before the founding of the Big Brother movement, there was no organized effort in behalf of the children of Protestant parents who passed through the court and were not committed to an institution. Ernest K. Coulter, clerk of the court, seeing the need of work similar to that of the other two great religious groups, induced a club of men in the Central Presbyterian Church to promise that each one would act as "Big Brother" to one court boy. The preliminary work was carried on by the club for a couple of years, and the movement aroused considerable interest. Other church clubs also took up the work. In March, 1907, the movement was reorganized, so as to be independent of the churches. For a time the branches of the Young Men's Christian Association acted as "centers" while neighboring church clubs acted as "locals." Later

the alliance with the Association was severed, the work becoming independent of sponsorship.

The Jewish Big Brother movement, modeled in many respects upon the Big Brother movement of the Protestants, was formally organized in February, 1909. At first, this society took only the boys on parole from the Hawthorne School, but later the work was extended to include parole cases from the House of Refuge.

All these religious agencies,* in contrast to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, have not been in any way connected officially with the court.†

I. GETTING INTO COURT

Let us follow a boy, accused of violation of the law, through all the possible vicissitudes of a court experience in Manhattan previous to September, 1910. The task may prove tedious but not nearly so meaningless or bewildering for the reader as for the thousands of families who had to go through it every year.

* The public is indebted to these volunteers for providing some probationary care for charges of the court before official probation was established. As soon as this was done, they were relieved of the undue pressure under which they had worked without proper equipment and aid. With the direction and supervision of the trained official representatives of the court, volunteer co-operation may now be developed and made highly useful.

† In March, 1912, as the result of an active campaign, 12 probation officers who had passed the civil service examination were assigned to the Manhattan children's court and made officers of the court, drawing their salary from the city. In 1913, the number of probation officers was raised to 20. The effectiveness with which the new probation work operates is, of course, a subject on which we have no data. The court still faces the difficulty of having too small a staff for the number of cases. The Manhattan court has over 10,000 cases under treatment in the course of a year. In Chicago, the average number of cases is only about 5,000 and there are 30 regular probation officers and 30 police probation officers, making a total of 60 persons to handle this smaller number of cases.

Once arrested, he was led to the nearest police station, followed by a throng of curious onlookers. At the station house children were occasionally discharged, but ordinarily their names were entered on the police docket and the parents were informed. If no one was found at home, a message was left with a near neighbor. Some one must vouch for the boy's appearance in court the next day before he could be liberated. If the boy was arrested in the evening, he might be taken directly to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children for detention and the parent notified to appear there for the child before midnight or at court the following morning.

The law provides that in cases of delinquency which do not involve a felony the police sergeant may accept the word of the parent or guardian as sufficient surety for presence at trial, without bail. However, the decision is left to the discretion of the officer, and bail was sometimes required for trivial offenses.* There is opportunity here for the local political "boss" to foster the belief that he is able to help a friendless family, and later to send his henchman to enlist the vote at the next election. There was no evidence that the local "boss" had any influence in the children's court; it is significant, however, that the people thought he had.

In one case the great political "boss" of the district personally accompanied the mother to the court. This was when Mrs. Hannon, apparently believing that it was the thing to do, had "got up her 'noive'" and

* Jack Spinner's mother was required to secure $1,000 bail—and fortunately she was able to secure it from the members of her church—for a "$500 burglary," the articles in question being two small bundles of kindling wood which, as it was afterward proved, the boy had not taken.

appealed to him at once, without waiting for her husband to tell her. Furthermore, Mrs. Hannon triumphantly pointed out, the boy who had been brought in simultaneously with her son, was fined $3.00 "because his father was not 'in' with the Senator" at that time. In two other cases it was the aged mother of the "boss" who seemed to have the deciding voice as to his actions! There were other parents, one a saloon keeper, who boasted that they could have secured aid if they had happened to need it. One old woman resident said she had "enough friends to get the boy off the gallus if nade be!" These stories illustrate the Celtic feudal relation which existed between the political sponsor of the district and its inhabitants.*

Bail was seldom demanded at the headquarters of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. When the boy was once inside this building, the general public could learn little of what went on except through the annual reports of the society, a formal visit, or reports from the families themselves. To many families the functions of the court and "the Gerry," as the society is called after its founder, were indistinguishable

* "Everybody in the district knows him. Everybody knows where to find him, and nearly everybody goes to him for assistance of one sort or another, especially the poor of the tenements. He is always obliging. He will go to the police courts to put in a good word for the 'drunks and disorderlies,' or pay their fines if a good word is not effective. He will attend christenings, weddings, and funerals. He will feed the hungry and help bury the dead.

"A philanthropist? Not at all. He is playing politics all the time. Brought up in Tammany Hall, he has learned how to read the hearts of the great mass of voters. He does not bother about reaching their heads. It is his belief that arguments and campaign literature have never gained votes. He seeks direct contact with the people, does them good turns when he can, and relies on their not forgetting him on election day." Riordan, W. L.: Plunkett of Tammany Hall. A Series of Very Plain Talks on Very Practical Politics, pp. 168-169. New York, McClure, 1905.

amidst the irritating confusion of their court experience. If any distinction was made, there was a dread of "the Gerry man" (sometimes used as a "bogey") which was not felt regarding the court.

By 10 o'clock of the first court day following the arrest, the boy was deposited by the society's agents in the waiting room on the second floor of the court building, or brought by his parents to the court room. After a tedious wait his name was shouted through the corridor back of the court, and relayed to the waiting room. He was then taken into the noisy court room, where he stood one step below the witness stand while the officer or complainants were sworn in and corroborated the data on the judge's or their own memoranda. The judge had only a brief record of the arrest and charge at this time, with an occasional verbal report from an officer of the society or a volunteer.* No investigation of the case, individual or social, was made before the trial. Our records contain cases which, had they been investigated, would have shown feeble-mindedness, adenoids, bad eyes, frail constitution, self-abuse, or terrible home conditions. On the other hand, there were cases where the character and family surroundings of the child should have shown a severe sentence to be unnecessary. Sometimes faulty records failed to show a previous arrest and the boy's word was taken that he had never been in court before.

Following the accusation the boy was allowed to

* The installation of official probation officers and the adoption of the new system of records have removed this obstacle to the judge's obtaining a comprehensive view of cases and reaching wise decisions. At the present time a careful preliminary investigation is made by the probation officer and presented in written form to the judge, prior to disposition of the case.

speak for himself, pleading guilty or not guilty. He stood on the top step, the center of a small group, about three feet from the judge. The distracting noise of the court room had at least one advantage; it prevented the audience from hearing what was said. After the boy had spoken, the mother or guardian might be admitted inside the rail to speak to the judge. In some cases, this privilege was refused. This constituted the distinct grievance of a group of parents who were not all of low type by any means. On the other hand, in two of our worst cases the judge, ignorant of conditions, proved susceptible to a shrewd appeal by the mother. It is hard to see, however, how the court could avoid such mistakes without an adequate investigating staff.

Occasionally the parents had engaged a lawyer, who was semi-officially recognized by the court and who collected what fees he could from the defendants. Sometimes the engagement was due to the initiative of the lawyer. In fully 80 per cent of the cases there was no lawyer formally pleading, and even when one was engaged he was in most cases unnecessary. The delay, and the cost to defendants, would have been much reduced if he had not been present. Since, however, every case registered as pleading "not guilty" was supposed to have had the opportunity of counsel, a lawyer's name was formally entered in the record after every such case.

Before disposing of a case the judge might remand the boy to the care of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children while an investigation was made, if he were not sure of the proper treatment to be given. Only flagrantly bad conditions show up, however, under superficial investigation. A case was occasionally "re-

manded for investigation" in order to give the boy and the family a lesson; a remand of this sort being in reality a mild punishment. Since the reformatories have refused short commitments, this has frequently been the substitute.

Unless the boy was an old case, it was only after the court had acted and he had stepped down from the stand that the volunteer probation agencies took a hand. By this time the boy and his parents were pretty well bewildered, and in the excitement it was often impossible to make clear to them what was meant by the questions asked or the suggestions offered by these volunteers. The entire court experience meant for the more sensitive among both parents and children a nervous shock, or, at least, an extremely trying ordeal which was frequently out of all proportion to the triviality of the offense in question. Where the type of family which passed through the ordeal with indifference was concerned, it was correspondingly ineffective.

The kinds of disposition which the judge might make of any given case are as follows:

(1) Dismissal for insufficient evidence. Evidence applies, as in criminal courts, only to the specific act; and if it be lacking, the court is powerless to act as guardian of the child as it could do if it had equity powers. However, in especially flagrant cases a child dismissed under one charge may be returned for improper guardianship.

(2) Acquittal, if the boy pleads not guilty, and there is some evidence that he was not involved in the escapade. This is sometimes technical and takes no

account of serious delinquency which may lie back of the affair.

(3) Suspended sentence, after conviction, with a warning of reprimand, but no supervision or visiting.

(4) A fine, usually one or two dollars, though it may be as low as 50 cents or as high as five dollars. This is used ordinarily as a lesson to the parents, since the burden of the fine falls upon them.

(5) "Committed for one day to the parental care of John Ward." This is for the purpose of having an officer give the boy a "licking" upstairs in the court, when a parent refuses to do so. Occasionally sentence is suspended, or fine remitted, on condition that the parent do this, in case the boy or his parents have not learned to say, when the judge asks the question that he has already been licked. This method is said by some of the judges to be very effective in preventing recidivation. Its reforming effect is not quite so certain.

(6) Parole in the custody of the parents, to be visited by the agents of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. A boy's parole is often continued month by month. At its expiration the boy may be discharged from parole, committed to an institution, or given a suspended sentence. In the case of school children, especially truants, the principal acts as a parole officer and signs the parole card daily, vouching for the boy's attendance and conduct. In case of serious offense during this period, parole may be revoked, and disposition made on both offenses, one sentence being held in reserve for its deterrent effect. If a child and his parents fail to appear on the prescribed date, a bench warrant is issued and the child is arrested and brought in. The same thing is sometimes done in improper

guardianship cases, if the agent's investigation has revealed conditions unimproved.

(7) Commitment to an institution, if possible to one of the same religious faith as the child. Neglected children are sent to charitable institutions; delinquents, usually older boys, after several offenses, violation of parole, or serious incorrigibility, to one of the reformatories. The House of Refuge is in many respects a prison for minors. Boys are committed to it who cannot be cared for by the New York Juvenile Asylum, Catholic Protectory, or Hawthorne School. Truants, if committed from this court, are sent to one of the truant schools.

This résumé of dispositions forms a basis for a natural division of our case material. We have studied the effects of the court experience upon different groups of children according to the sentence received. To a large extent the home visiting was apportioned among our investigators along the same lines. The disposition indicates the judgment of the court as to the seriousness of the offense, and it is the effect of this judgment which is to be tested.

As has been stated in the introduction, a statistical study of the delinquency of boys was made in 241 West Side families. Four hundred and sixty-three arrests of boys occurred among these families during the period covered by our investigation. Data are available concerning the offenses committed and the action taken in court for 454 of these 463 cases. As some boys were arrested more than once, and as some families had two or more boys who were arrested, the 454 arrests affected but 259 boys and 221 families.*

* For statistical data see Appendix, Table 12, p. 172.

There were, in the families investigated, a number of boys who were not themselves arrested, but who were, nevertheless, properly included in our study of delinquency. Their gang relations or other connections with the boys who were arrested made their cases significant. As these boys and the boys concerning whose arrests complete statistical information is lacking numbered, together, 35, the total number of boys dealt with is 294.

Not all the boys were really delinquent. Some were brought into court because of improper guardianship, an offense on the part of the parents rather than on that of the children; and others who were not incorrigible came to the notice of the investigators. The word "delinquent" seems properly to apply to 249 of the 294 boys.

We shall divide the 454 arrests studied into three main groups: (1) The group of 260 cases in which the court did nothing after the child left its doors; namely, those acquitted, discharged, released under suspended sentence, whipped, or fined; (2) the group of 95 paroled cases; (3) the group of 99 cases committed to institutions. Each of these groups will be considered separately in the following sections.

II. THE BOY WHO IS LET GO

The majority of the children who daily passed through the court were dismissed either on the day of the trial or, at the latest, after the rehearing a day or two later.* We have recorded 260 of these cases, considered trivial by the court and closed officially as soon as the offender

* Two-thirds of all the cases handled in 1909 involved minor or trivial offenses, according to the Handbook of the New York Child Welfare Exhibit, 1911. Section on Laws and Administration, p. 162.

passed out of the door on Eleventh Street. As some children were arrested more than once on these petty charges, the 260 arrests affected 197 individuals and 176 families. In the words of the district, these 197 boys were simply "let go."

The district phrase does not discriminate between the several verdicts under which this might happen. If evidence was wanting to prove the child guilty of the special act of which he was accused, he was "discharged." If, on the other hand, he was convicted, he might still be allowed to go free with a "suspended sentence," under which he might be retried at any time during the ensuing year. However, a retrial practically never occurred unless the boy was rearrested under a new charge. This fundamental distinction, then, between innocence and guilt becomes a mere technical difference and must be gleaned by the stickler for verbal accuracy from the court records and the rulings of the law. It is not to be discovered in the minds of either parents or children. Both verdicts came to the same thing in the end. "Aw, he got out a' right the next day. They couldn't do nothin' to him for a little thing like that."

Sometimes the boy was let go but a fine was imposed. This was a fact never to be forgotten by his parents. Several years after the event, the mother would recall ruefully: "He cost me two dollars for that fine, he did—an' him only standin' and lookin' on." When the fine was not forthcoming, the youngster might be held for the day in the court building and then dismissed. Sometimes the record reads "Committed for a day," which means that the culprit had received a trouncing from an official of the court. But there was very little difference

after the lapse of a few months in the effect of these verdicts, whether of discharge or suspended sentence, because none projected themselves very far into the later experience of the boy. There was some additional hectoring at home and the full recital of events to the gang. Then, with a few exceptions, the experience became past history.

Owing to the thousands of petty cases which flood the court the individual case was cursorily handled during the hearing as well as afterward. There was seldom any effort to probe deeper into the affair than appeared from the version given by the little group before the bench, consisting of the officer who made the arrest, the complainant, if there was one, perhaps a friend or witness who was interested and chose to be present, and the boy's parents. Sometimes the mother did not even reach the bench, so great was the speed with which such cases were reeled off. Very seldom was there any time for patient questioning, without which the truth cannot be obtained from a reluctant and fearful child or from a parent already on the defensive. The disposition of the case, according to the routine procedure, must be based on an inadequate knowledge of the circumstances. On a minor charge the judge would seldom utilize his right to adjourn a hearing, and even this so-called "Remand for Investigation" might be used merely as a light punishment, since the child was kept for several days in the detention rooms of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. It did not necessarily mean that any further inquiry was made.

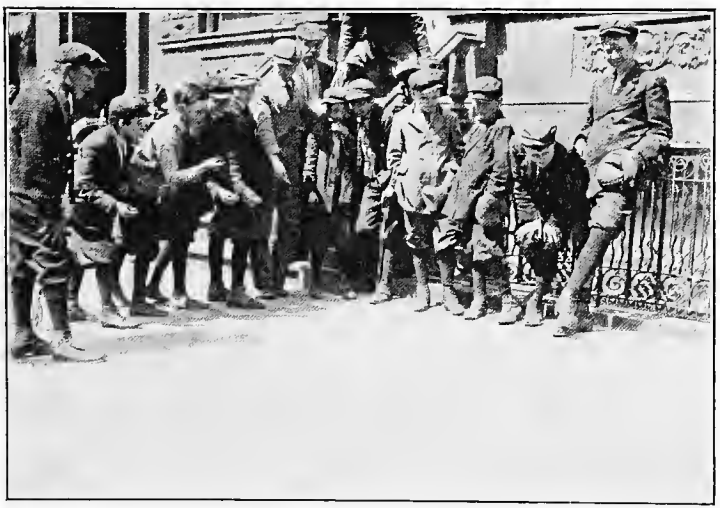
In so rough a hopper as our system of arrests, boys of all sorts are run in on petty complaints. Of course, many of the tales of needless and mistaken arrests must

be taken with a large grain of salt, as the mother is often quite ready to accept the boy's version. But the evidence of disinterested residents and social workers in the district indicated the casual nature of many of the arrests. An arrest was simply bad luck, like the measles. "I ain't been in court yet!" said Joey Burns. "I've only been in court twice," said Patrick Coogan.

Nor is the argument entirely against the "cop." The chances are that, if the boy wasn't throwing craps then, he had done it often enough before, and the policeman, as the mother bitingly comments, "has got his job to hold down." In case of a bonfire or a fight, it is humanly impossible to select from a horde of running boys the exact one who threw the can or lit the match. An onlooker is pretty sure to be hauled in and an angry woman to be down around the officer's ears with, "It's a foine sight of a strappin' strong man ye are t' be takin' up a poor innicint b'y an' lettin' thieves and sluggers get away on yez."

Yet there are important differences among these boys arrested on a seemingly trivial class of charges, such as "Loitering in the hallway of a house in West Forty-ninth Street," "Making a noise," "Shouting and creating a disturbance to the annoyance of the occupants of said house." The offender may be a weakling, frail, ill-nourished, and backward. For this type of boy, sensitive and timid as he already is by nature, the court experience simply serves to increase his defect. Or, at the other extreme, he may be the leader on his block, and the prime spirit of all its "deviltry." Hardened by a long career of semi-vagabondage in the streets, this boy is likely to be utterly scornful of the courts and their discipline. But most of the boys brought in on minor

"We Ain't Doin' Nothin'"



The Same Gang at Craps

charges belong somewhere between these two extremes. Many of them are merely "wild," like scores of other fellows on their streets, and would have a fair prospect of turning out well under proper supervision.

It is safe to say that "delinquent" was a misnomer for at least one-fifth of the 197 boys so easily dismissed from court. On a conservative estimate, 39 of these boys could not be charged with real misdemeanor, still less with crime. The sum of their iniquity was the violation of a city ordinance; they had "obstructed a sidewalk of a public street while engaged in playing" some game ranging from football to craps.

One boy, for instance, was arrested for pitching pennies. His parents were sending him to high school and had managed to give each of his older brothers two years in a business college—facts which betoken in our district unusual family energy and ambition. The boy himself was the leading spirit of an especially vigorous settlement club. His mother was firm in her protest that "parents ought to be given a chance to punish for such little things themselves." Even the graver offense of stone throwing, when traced to its origin, does not always proceed from criminal instincts. The course of public opinion on his block draws any spirited boy, sooner or later, into some of the closely contested fights which occur periodically in lieu of a better form of recreation.

These charges are less a reflection of the boy's waywardness than of the community's disregard for his needs and rights. Apart from the misdemeanors which brought them into court, these 39 boys were well up to the best standard of behavior in the neighborhood. In only one case was there any serious truancy and the

boys of working age all had steady jobs. The explanation of their better behavior was to be found, for the most part, in the better circumstances of their families; for most of them lived in fair homes in the more prosperous blocks of the district.

A few of this group, however, belonged to the most heavily handicapped families of our acquaintance. One boy, in particular, stands out for a degree of courage and energy remarkable for his years. His name was Sam Sharkey. His family lived on a river block from which it was assumed that no good could ever come. "If the rent's paid, there ain't nothing more looked for from that lot," was the neighborhood opinion of this particular row. On the ground floor of one of these squalid houses Sam and his mother kept up a home for the younger brothers and sisters. Mrs. Sharkey scrubbed the floors of the dental college and the boy drove a delivery wagon. Sam was his mother's steadfast right hand, sharing every responsibility with her. During one period of four weeks, for instance, while Mrs. Sharkey lay in the hospital with peritonitis, fifteen-year-old Sam kept up the home without her. "All the time I was out of my head," said Mrs. Sharkey, speaking of her hospital experience later, "I was talking about Sam and calling on him to do things. The nurse, she says to me when I was myself again, 'Who is this Sam that you've been talking about all this time?' says she. 'That's my boy,' says I. And I was for getting up and coming right home to help him, only they wouldn't let me." This was the same boy who had been arrested not long before his mother's illness, for playing craps. In his case there was great need of outside help and interference of the right sort; but thanks to the marvelous

stamina of young life still to be found occasionally even in the depths of squalor, there was certainly no problem of delinquency.

The largest group among the 197 boys discharged from court, which numbered 96, were of the type which the neighborhood characterizes as "wild." This means boys who are troublesome in school and are probably truants. They are common nuisances, marauding on streets and roofs, damaging property, lying, and pilfering. Boys of this sort may be counted by the hundreds through these blocks. There was nothing to indicate that the 96 representatives who had been in court were very different from their neighbors, except by their ill luck in being "pinched." It would be a desperate outlook indeed if all the "wild" lads of the West Side were likely to develop into the lawless Gopher element which as boys they emulate. Still, for all of them the chances are precarious. There can be no question, however, that it is still possible to counteract the influences which are hastening many of these boys along a criminal path.

The record of one twelve-year-old boy shows the typical cross currents of influence which affect the boys in this class. Hugh Mallory was the youngest of eight children. During the first ten years of his life his family had lived in the house in which he was born. Here they suffered so much from sickness, death, and poverty that they finally moved to another street, hoping to "change their luck." After this they were more prosperous for a time until the father and one of the older boys got out of work and things began to look less cheerful. Mallory was a hard drinker, especially when out of work. The younger children feared him when he was in liquor, as it made him ugly-tempered. A special an-

tagonism existed between him and the second son, who would get out of bed even late at night and go out on the streets if his father came home drunk and in a quarrelsome mood.

Still, the family had "never had to ask help but had had enough to eat and could get along." James, the oldest son, a young man of twenty-three, was the mainstay of the family. The mother had done well under the hard load she had had to carry. She was thrifty, making all the children's clothes, even to the boys' jackets, but she showed the effects of her hard life in both her thin, worn appearance and her slack moral standards. She was not above conniving at such pilfering on the part of the boys as would "help along." For two years Hugh had brought home coal regularly from the neighboring freight yard. Mrs. Mallory said that he was very smart about it and showed with pride two large bags which he had gathered. The method, she explained, was for one boy to climb on a car and throw down the coal to the others, who picked it up. She was, however, constantly in fear lest Hugh should be arrested. The court records showed that Hugh had never been brought in for stealing coal, but he had been arrested for stealing old iron. It was natural that "swiping coal for his mother" should lead to "swiping" things for his own purposes. Hugh and his fifteen-year-old brother were members of a club in a Protestant institutional church. The club had a camp to which both boys went in the summer. They had to pay their railroad expenses, and got the money, in part at least, from their winnings at craps. The outcome for Hugh was hard to foretell. It was a toss-up as to which of the elements playing on the boy's nature would ultimately assume the dominant place.

An effort to swing the balance with boys like these seems thoroughly worth while.

Youngsters like these form a large group, and are perhaps the most vulnerable point of attack for a court. With those who are merely "wild," the oversight and help of a good probation officer should bring the best results. Leaders in settlement clubs, Big Brothers and social workers generally, agree that the problem of the boy of this type, whatever his surroundings, is largely one of wise direction of his sports and other activities. If the families of the culprits and the social agencies which have the welfare of the city boy at heart could be brought into close co-operation with the court through an efficient probation department, it is believed that results would quickly be shown in the diminution of the delinquent boy problem.

The remaining 62 of the group of boys let go presented a less hopeful aspect. The court charge was not an index to be trusted. Charges of petty theft were frequent, and six burglaries were recorded against this group. On the other hand, some of the boys, whom we knew to be seriously delinquent, had been brought before the judge for playing craps, building a fire, or some equally trifling offense, and discharged. When we pushed the investigation further, we found in the case of all these 62 boys a situation whose elements already foretold a useless if not a vicious manhood, unless vigorous and sustained effort were made to rescue them.

Matty Gilmore, for instance, had been brought in on the charge of "maintaining a bonfire on a public street." On nearer acquaintance, he proved to be a boy in whom a definite criminal tendency was already noticeable. He had never worked more than a week or two at a time in

spite of the many jobs to which he had been "chased." In this he was carrying out the tradition of his family. His father and three older brothers had always loafed by spells "on" the mother and sisters, who worked steadily.

One of the jobs he had held for two weeks was that of delivering packages and collecting for the Diamond Laundry. At the end of the first week, his employer discovered that he was pilfering. Accused by the manager, Matty confessed his guilt but earnestly declared that he had been induced to pilfer by a friend of his, "a bad boy," who was also in the service of the laundry and who was discharged forthwith. Matty remained. On Tuesday of the next week, two friends of his brought back a package with the tale that Matty had been run over by a train and was too badly hurt to work. He had entrusted them with the package to see that it was returned. It was not until several days later that the laundry discovered that Matty and his friends had delivered all the packages but one that morning and had pocketed the money collected. His mother and sisters made good the laundryman's loss and the boy was not brought into court. A year later, he was arrested for disposing of several gold watches which had been stolen in a Connecticut town. As he was sixteen by this time he was sent, after a week or so in the Tombs, to the town where the theft had been committed, and spent several weeks in jail awaiting trial. He was then dismissed and allowed to come home again, where he took up his old habits, lounging in the streets and "hanging out" with the gang in its headquarters at "Fatty" Walker's candy store.

The transient court experience leaves perhaps a

deeper impression on the mother than on the boy. Many, to be sure, take it lightly enough and look upon the whole elaborate system as a sort of adjunct to their family discipline. "It was just as well," one would say, "Oh, of course, he plays now, but he did keep off the streets there for awhile. I guess it did him some good, scared him some." As for its effect upon herself, this type of mother is likely to show the indifference of the woman who "don't seem to mind, she has seen so much of them courts."

This statement does not necessarily mean that the woman has been to the court repeatedly. A single experience may go a long way toward inducing this state of mind. Mrs. Tracy's account of Michael's trial, for instance, shows how the cursory hearing given the case was bound to diminish her respect for the court. Michael's actual trial, which was over in three minutes, was the anticlimax of a distressful day. It had begun with a hurried appeal to the local political boss, which had been followed by a trip to the court under the direction of one of his henchmen and by a long, anxious wait at the court from nine in the morning until two in the afternoon. And then, according to Mrs. Tracy, "The judge says, 'Officer, did you see the stone in his hand?' 'No,' says he. 'Well,' says the judge, 'don't bring me any more cases like this.' We none of us got a chance to speak, me nor Michael, nor the man who made the complaint, and who come down to court."

But many cannot take it so philosophically, especially those who work hard and are not so much in the drift of neighborhood events and sentiments. They have not heard enough gossip to regard an arrest as a necessary episode and to discount its dangers. Instantly the great

fear looms up that their boy is to be taken away. In the momentary panic, good women who have the welfare of their children most sincerely at heart will falsify to the judges without a scruple. A clergyman of the district said that more than once he had heard the same mother who had previously come to him in deep anxiety concerning her son's misconduct give him an unblemished reputation before the judge. It rarely occurred to one of these women that any real aid was to be had from the court. To them it was simply another of the many hardships which worried and harassed their overburdened lives. Loss of time, and perhaps of money for a fine, are a very real sacrifice for the woman who works; but even these are nothing to compare with their worry and distress. "I couldn't help crying, do you know, all the time I was there, and it made me sick for a week."

We have then to consider the result of this whole cumbersome system of minor arrests and discharges. On the whole, we were led to the conclusion that the handling of minor cases in the manner described did hold in check the trifling delinquencies, more properly termed nuisances, especially in the better blocks. In the poorer sections it was not very successful even as a check on nuisances, as the casual passerby quickly learned; and it did not seem to have the slightest effect on serious lawlessness, where the need of restraint and discipline was greatest. The hurried hearing, the slight consideration, and the facile discharge were not only ineffective but often positively harmful. There is no getting around the fact that the court dealt with unjust severity with some boys, while with others its very leniency tended to make order and justice a mockery.

There is no simple panacea for all these troubles, but in the immediate situation and along the lines of court action some changes are worth trying out. The matter of arrests is a difficult one to control; often no valid distinction between the guilty and the innocent can be made on the spot, and even the best of police are in no way equipped to decide with certainty as to the degree of an offender's guilt. However, it would be better to eliminate altogether a number of the most trifling arrests rather than to treat the offenders in too cursory a manner after they are brought into court.

The greater expenditure of time and money which a more thorough treatment of those arrested presupposes is an absolute necessity if we are to increase to any marked degree the success of the court in grappling with the real problem of delinquency. For this problem, as has been indicated, the best solution undoubtedly is to be found in the maintenance of an adequate and efficient probation staff, whose duty it shall be to furnish data concerning the situation back of the minor charges as well as of the more serious ones, upon which the judge may base his action.

III. PAROLED IN THE CUSTODY OF HIS PARENTS

As there was no official probation* in the children's court of Manhattan, the judges had to rely on volunteer probation and what is known as "parole."† Under the so-called parole system as it existed in connection

* As already indicated official probation has taken the place of the "parole" system since this chapter was written.

† This use of the term "parole" is not strictly correct. "Parole" more properly applies to the supervision of delinquents after release from institutions.

with the Manhattan Court, no constructive effort was brought to bear on the boy beyond reproof and advice given in court and an attempt to impress him with a fear of the consequences to himself if these were disregarded. This method was used in cases deemed too serious for immediate discharge, yet not suitable for commitment to institutions. There are among our records 95 arrests where this solution was tried. The number of children concerned was 83; the number of families, 76.

The procedure in such cases took more time and consideration than when the child was simply discharged. Sometimes the "parole" was granted on the day of the first hearing without any previous investigation, but usually the child was sent to the detention rooms of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children for two or three days to await a second hearing. During this time an officer of the society made an inquiry and brought a report to the court. If the judge then decided to "parole" the culprit, he was sent home to his parents, to whom the following card was given:

"Your child....., paroled in your custody until....., on which date you will report with h.. at the Children's Court, 66 Third Avenue (Corner of Eleventh Street), at 10 a. m. for further instructions from the Court.

"The disposition of the case will depend entirely upon h.. conduct while so released and your supervision over h...

"The case will be re-investigated by the New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty of Children, and a full report submitted on the date set for the return to Court."

The date set for his next appearance was generally about a month later. Just before it arrived another inquiry was made to form the basis of a new report to the court. The officer of the society to whom the case

was assigned had no responsibility for the conduct of the child during this interval. His sole task was to discover what it had been and to report it correctly. The judge glanced over the papers concerning the previous hearing, read the new report, and accordingly terminated or extended the "parole." As a usual thing it was only two or three months before the forces of the law ceased to concern themselves with the boy, and for the time at least he passed beyond the oversight of the court. He might have to report, perhaps once, perhaps four times —very seldom more. In case of failure to do this, a bench warrant might be issued on which he would be brought in, but this happened very seldom.

A comparison of our 95 paroled cases with all the cases, 1,805 in number, under the care of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children during 1909, shows that the average period of parole was about the same for both groups. Speaking in general terms, about one-third of the children in each group were on parole a month or even less, and at the end of three months the parole was ended for all but a small proportion of the cases in both groups. The inadequacy of the one to three months' parole is best indicated by comparing it with the usual term of commitments. The institutions have, by common consent, declared that a commitment of less than one and a half to two years is not sufficient to effect any real change in the character of the offender. There is, then, little to expect in the way of actual reformation from brief parole terms. Especially is this true so long as they are not re-enforced by any direct effort to modify the conditions of the child's life or to influence his character and conduct.

A second defect of the parole system was the im-

portant part played in the court's decision by the written word of the parole officer. Meager statements, even when accurate in themselves, may be as misleading as if they were false. Two reports placed in the hands of the judge may, on the face of them, be not dissimilar; but in the light of further investigation, one of the cases may prove to be far more serious than the other.

An investigation too frequently was made as follows. The parole officer secured the mother's statement as to the boy's conduct, hours, and associates; the testimony of the neighbors as to the character of the family; a statement from the boy's school; and, perhaps, if he was working, a statement from his employer as to his regularity, conduct, and quality of work. The following is a typical record of such an investigation:

This record concerns Patrick Staley, a boy of twelve, living at West Street, "charged with disorderly conduct in that he did climb on the rear of a truck moving through said street and take and carry away merchandise, to wit: one jar, containing a quantity of mustard."

The report of the investigation reads: "Defendant lives at the above address with his widowed mother, in a very poorly furnished home of three rooms, where they have resided the past two years. Mother of the defendant is employed as a cleaner in Public School 51 where she earns $6.00 a week. This is the only income of the family. Mrs. Staley was seen and states that her son Patrick has been very well behaved since arrested and paroled. Further states that he attends school every day at Public School 51 and that he has no bad associates that she knows of. Further states that he is never on the street at night and is well behaved in and about the house. Neighbors, all of the poorest class, state that the boy Patrick is a good boy. No school record was obtained as there is no school this week."

With every rehearing the same ground was covered in the reinvestigation—a second interview with the mother, the neighbors, the school, and possibly the em-

ployer. In addition to the parole officer's report, the boy was supposed to present a card signed daily by his teacher and parent. Of the full family make-up, its history, the attitude of the parents, the temper of the home, the character of the neighborhood, the boy's individuality and interest,—in a word, of the whole vital human situation represented, nothing is to be gleaned from the curt and general phrases of hastily gathered reports. The importance, therefore, of insuring complete and thorough investigation through the employment of a trained staff of workers cannot be overemphasized.*

The following record, as brief as the one quoted above, was based on a very thorough investigation by a trained worker.

This report concerns James Riley, a boy of fourteen, living in West 53rd Street, charged with creating a disturbance by "throwing missiles and knocking off a man's hat."

The report of the investigation reads: "Defendant resides at the above address with his parents in a fairly clean and comfortable home of four rooms. Mrs. Riley was seen and she states that her son has been very well behaved since on parole. That he has been attending school regularly and has no bad associates to her knowledge. Further states that he is never out of the house evenings. Further states that her daughter Mary practically takes care of the home and that she herself is employed in Bellevue Hospital and her husband is a longshoreman. Neighbors and janitress all speak favorably of the Riley family and state that the boy James since on parole is very well behaved in and about the premises and seems to attend school more regularly. At Public School 82 the following report was obtained: "Attendance satisfactory, conduct excellent, work fair to good."

The two boys, the two homes, the two situations were

* Since the above was written, a new system of records recommended by the state probation commission has been adopted by the court for the use of probation officers. They cover all cases investigated or on probation since March, 1912.

radically different. Yet, although there may be no misstatement, the cases of the boy James and the boy Patrick appear, on the face of the reports, to be quite similar.

It does not follow from the brevity with which facts may be presented that they are the sifted truth from which the chaff of falsehood has been blown away. And yet in gathering this kind of evidence, judicious sifting is absolutely necessary. The word of the parents must be considered and is of great importance, but it cannot be taken on its face value. In a district such as ours, with its marked hostility toward the forces of the law, it would indeed be strange if a parent on the defensive would choose to give reliable evidence rather than evasive and misleading statements. And the more serious the charge, the less reliable, naturally, is the parent's word. At best it is merely indicative of the father's or mother's judgment, which is often too feeble a staff to be depended upon.

For similar reasons, the testimony of neighbors is open to question. The Bransfields, who had a reputation from one end of the block to the other as being the "toughest of the tough" were nevertheless, according to court records, "favorably spoken of in the house." Thus, also, the parents of James Burckel were set down as "to all appearances respectable. They are favorably spoken of in the house. They have lived there for the past four years." Yet the father of James Burckel had served three terms in prison. On the other hand, really respectable parents deeply resent the stigma of having the news spread through the house that a probation officer has been inquiring about them. Evidence of this sort, unreliable as it is likely to be for the court on the one hand and mortifying to the parents on the

other, should be gathered only with the greatest care and discrimination.

The school has been in the past, and must continue to be in the future, one of the most important contributors to the information of the court. Here is to be found a group of people—principal, teachers, and possibly truant officer—who are free from the personal bias of the family and who have been in daily contact with the child arraigned. This joining of forces with the school was one of the great advances made by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children in its development of the parole system. A good school record was a concrete argument in favor of the boy, while truancy and loafing were nearly certain to go hand in hand with any very serious misconduct. But in order to be useful such records need to be as full as possible. School attendance, for instance, is best reported by giving the exact number of days absent and present. Similarly, inquiry concerning his employment should include the statement of his hours of work and the exact periods of unemployment as far as this is possible.

The work record of the wage-earner corresponds in importance to the school records of the younger boy. This inquiry must be handled very carefully. The fact of a boy's delinquency, if brought directly to his employer's attention, may bear disproportionately hard upon him. But often the mere recital of his work history by his parents or by himself would reveal the essential facts, such as the number of shifts in employment, the speedy "throwing up" of his job, and the long waits between work.

Parents, neighbors, school, and place of work—this completes the list of sources from which, at the time

of our investigation, the court drew its information. The start made with the schools had not been extended to the social and charitable agencies of the neighborhood. Yet the records of the relief societies often contained in compact form, ready to hand, facts which were vital to a full understanding of the case. In 41 of the 95 parole cases which came under our observation, the families had records in the offices of relief societies. Some of the family histories extended back fifteen or twenty years, but in none of these cases had the records been consulted by the court.

The agencies which keep less systematic records and yet come in close personal touch with handicapped families—settlements and churches—are no less valuable as sources of information. In one of the parole cases, involving a rather serious charge of burglary, the insufficient account of the home surroundings was supplemented by the apology, "As the house in which the family lived is tenanted entirely by Italians, very little information could be obtained for or against the boy." Yet across the street was a settlement in which the boy's history was well known and which was well qualified to sponsor plans for his improvement. No opportunity was given it to advise commitment for this lad in preference to the parole and suspension of sentence which sent him back to the streets absolutely without supervision. Thus the social worker who may have been watching a hopeless situation drag on for years without power to intervene may lose the chance to carry out a plan for the child's welfare, and the court may fall back upon a hasty judgment in place of the social worker's well matured program. The decision which may hang upon a slender thread of scanty informa-

tion is one of no slight importance. It determines the environment of the child for several years during one of the most plastic periods of his life. The verdict of the judge will determine whether these will be spent either in his own home or in an institution.

The main test of any system which either assumes the name or takes the place of probation is its effect on the individual child. What is the consequence for the boy? Does it improve or encourage him so that he makes any effort in a new direction? This is a difficult task to accomplish, and to measure results is perhaps still more difficult. Yet a priori it is evident that with a system of parole carried on as here described permanent benefit for the individual will not result. In studying the entire history of any boy, the few months of parole seem such a minor influence in comparison with the other forces constantly working upon him, that it is impossible to assign any large share in the final outcome to the effect of such casual oversight as the court has given. Nor was insufficient supervision from this source compensated for by the volunteer probation. As far as we could discover, only 36 per cent of the paroled children on our records had been visited by volunteers. Yet this percentage was undoubtedly higher than the percentage for all cases brought into court, because we deliberately selected more than a due proportion of our cases from among those under volunteer probation.

We have traced as accurately as possible the outcome of parole in our 95 cases.* In 78 cases the boy

* For three of the 95 paroled cases this information was not available. Data concerning the remaining 92 cases and the 1,492 paroled cases disposed of by the Manhattan court in 1909 may be found in the Appendix, Table 13, p. 173.

was discharged or sentence was suspended when the parole period ended; in 14 cases the boy was committed to an institution during parole. There were other cases in which the boy was either rearrested and committed or rearrested and discharged after parole. In fact, our records show that this was true of about one-half of the boys. A considerable group, however, did not return to court at all before the age of sixteen. The fact that the boys of this latter group escaped being arrested again does not justify us in concluding that they were "reformed." We therefore studied the later histories of the 83 boys concerned in the 95 cases of arrest and parole, to ascertain, as far as possible, whether the outcome was poor or satisfactory. This inquiry was conducted, and the results were considered, on the basis of boys rather than of cases. Our judgment was determined by each boy's regularity at school or work subsequent to his parole, by the accounts of his parents as to whether he was "out from under them" or doing well, and especially as to whether he had committed any offense more serious than the mere prank, which in most of the cases had led to the original arrest. It appeared that of the boys rearrested almost all had conduct records that amply justified their being again brought into court. In less than one-third of the histories studied was the recent record so satisfactory, or the cause for complaint so slight, that reformation may be said to have taken place. That the system had a deterrent effect on some of the boys is undoubtedly true, but that it accounted for any real reformation is not very probable.

IV. THE BOY THAT GETS "SENT UP"

The theory of commitment is in itself a matter for serious consideration. It involves an attempt by the state to undo in a new environment the evil results of old environmental and home influences. In other words, the law decides that the family life has broken down for the time being and that others shall undertake to do what the parents have failed to accomplish. This is a grave step, presupposing a crisis and justifying itself only through absolute necessity and the actual achievement of its purpose.

The first question to be asked concerning any sentence of commitment is, was no better alternative possible? The preceding discussion has shown that the judge has been seriously hampered through lack of provision for more adequate methods of treatment. He could not obtain for the boy, who needed also guidance and incentive as well as discipline, the careful oversight which a well organized probation system would have afforded.

The second question concerns the effectiveness of the sentence. Has the boy himself been helped in the direction of discipline and an ordered life, and has the neighborhood been benefited by the removal of a lawless spirit? These are the questions which we shall try to answer concerning some of the boys "sent up."

The emphasis put upon the neighborhood point of view has excluded any critical examination of the institutions to which the boys were committed or any statistical inquiry into their results. As in the previous chapters, the angle of vision was exclusively that of the

district. A certain group of the neighborhood boys had been committed, and we tried to find out how the neighborhood appraised this action and what its results had been for the neighborhood and the boys concerned. The methods of different institutions, whether sound or otherwise, their successes and failures, did not concern us in themselves, but only as they had influenced the lives of our children and were reflected in the attitude of our people.

The conclusions of this section are based on a study of 99 commitments, meted out to 75 children, in 67 families. In this group were the boys who had the longest and most serious delinquency histories, and it was important that the account should be made as complete as possible. Five different sources were consulted—the court record of the trial, the report of the investigating agent of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, the school records, the relief society records, and statements from the family and neighbors. None of these sources was complete in itself. However, the outline of the boy's delinquency history, including trivial arrests and more serious escapades for which no arrest had been made, was pieced together as fully as possible. There is surely much more, at least in the way of illuminating detail, that cannot be known because it had been left unrecorded. The meagerness of the information is a serious handicap to the agencies which seek to reform the boy, and to the judge who must pronounce sentence upon him.

There are several different institutions to which the boys of this group had been committed from the children's court. The division of these cases falls largely along religious lines. The Catholic Protectory receives

all the children of Catholic parents, excepting the extreme cases of delinquent girls, who are sent to the House of the Good Shepherd. The children of Protestant parents are sent, if they are truants merely, to the New York and Brooklyn truant schools. In the more serious cases of delinquency, the boys are sent to the Juvenile Asylum and the girls to the House of Mercy. There is one city institution, the House of Refuge, which is nonsectarian and usually takes charge of the most seriously delinquent boys.

In committing a boy to an institution, the judge was obliged to be guided mainly by the culprit's court record. The number of the boy's arrests had perhaps mounted past all ignoring and he was "put away." On the other hand, he may have been caught in some particularly striking offense, or his gang may have been in need of a subduing example. In some of these cases the judge meted out the drastic punishment even where there had been only a single previous arrest. He had, as we have seen, no facilities at hand for having a thorough investigation made of the situation.

The absence of investigation was definitely traceable in our group of committed cases. The records of 53 arrests were studied to discover whether the cases had been remanded for investigation or not. Eleven, or about one-fifth, of the 53 cases had been so remanded; 42, or four-fifths, had not been remanded. The significance of the 42 cases lies in the fact that the decision was given on the day of the first hearing. Therefore it is certain that no new investigation was made, and that the boys were removed from their homes at a time when it was impossible for the court to have known

what these homes were like.* In these cases, it was the home and the family rather than the boy which were tried and judged without investigation. Moral bankruptcy was declared without the necessary evidence in hand. We may well doubt whether in the cases of some of these boys there was not a better alternative to the institution sentence.

Even when from the point of view of the court the crisis has been reached, a thorough investigation will often make the sentence more intelligent, and occasionally reverse the decision for a commitment. Certain cases that seem desperate at the hearing do not prove hopeless when conditions are thoroughly understood, and are sometimes capable of disentanglement at home. Certainly every intelligent effort should be made by the court before allowing the odium of commitment to rest upon one of its charges.

There were three boys in the group of 53 in whose cases commitment had been a serious error. The first was a Jewish boy who had been caught pilfering with a gang of thieves. At his school, where he was rated as a well behaved and promising pupil, the teachers declared that the act was foreign to his character. In fact, the school refused to believe that the charge was true. The boy was overwhelmed by his sentence. He refused to return to his class, gave up his previous plans of going to the high school, and settled down as an assistant in a trade for which he had no aptitude. A thorough knowledge of his home and school relations would have shown the court the sufficiency of a lighter sentence and would have left the boy his elasticity and

* This condition was changed with the installation of the official probation staff in March, 1912.

ambition. A second lad, who came from a family of very high morals, was arrested during the slack season of his trade. His entire previous history from all sources showed that the sentence was unnecessarily severe. The third case was that of a boy who was in the care of a Big Brother. During the temporary absence of the latter from the city, the boy got into trouble and was immediately "sent up" without waiting until the Big Brother could be consulted. The boy had had a brutalized childhood, but was being slowly won back to confidence in his fellows, and the temporary lapse should have been condoned. Commitment took away practically all his chances, and all the work of his Big Brother friend had gone for nothing.

But let us consider the boy whose case really cried out for extreme discipline, and who was accordingly "put away." This drastic step ought to have formed the climax of his delinquency history. The test of commitment is whether it really pulls the boy up short in his delinquency career. As a matter of fact we find that it frequently did not. The boy who had several arrests on his record tended to add another commitment to his first.

The final criticism of the system lies in the fact that the commitment was often only the beginning of further trouble. This is illustrated by the history of two brothers, John and Michael Moran. The Morans were respectable Irish people who had lived in the district for years. The careers of the two boys given below were by no means in line with family precedents. The mother was a decent, hardworking woman who had been a widow for many years. The boys, as she said apathetically, had "got out from under her" and condi-

tions had been too much for them. More terrible pictures of childhood than those given in these records would be hard to find.

John's court career was begun before he was ten years old. A year later he was brought into court a second time on a charge of theft. A few months afterward a third arrest sent him to the Catholic Protectory. The commitment was a short-term one—thirty days—and obviously had little effect. Six months later he was brought into court a fourth time and in this case he was paroled. One month later there was a fifth arrest, and although his parole had not yet expired, his case was neither investigated nor his parole revoked, but he was simply discharged. Three months afterward a sixth arrest sent him to the Protectory for a second term.

Michael, his brother, had had three different sentences to the same institution, where he had in fact spent a great part of his short life. His first arrest was for the theft of a pair of shoes. He was committed to the Protectory for ten months. Three months after he had been set at liberty he was recommitted for over a year, this time for stone throwing. A year and a half intervened,—only one arrest during that time, though that was on the serious charge of burglary—and then he was once more sentenced to the Catholic Protectory for a year and a half. The charge was truancy. Four months after his discharge he was arrested again, and a year after he had been discharged from his third term he was back in an institution. In this last arrest his mother testified "that he wouldn't work at all, and might just as well be put away." There was a touch of humor in the fact that he expressed a preference for

some other institution, because "he had been in the College three times already." He was sent to the truant school.

The following outlines give in graphic form the delinquency records of these two brothers:

JOHN MORAN'S DELINQUENCY RECORD

May 7, 1907.....Arrested in company with other boys. Remanded until the 8th. Pleaded guilty. Sentence suspended.

June 9, 1908.....Arrested for theft with another boy. No complaint. Discharged.

October 22, 1908.....Arrested for selling newspapers at midnight. (No record of this at S. P. C. C.) Committed to the Catholic Protectory. Discharged November 20, 1908.

June 10, 1909.....Arrested on a charge of improper guardianship; found asleep in a hallway at 2:30 a. m. Adjourned until June 14, then paroled until August 14.

July 24, 1909.....Arrested for begging and selling newspapers at night. Discharged. (No parole investigation.)

October 7, 1909.....Arrested at 11 p. m. in a disturbance in the street. Recommitted to the Catholic Protectory.

MICHAEL MORAN'S DELINQUENCY RECORD

November 9, 1905.....Arrested for theft of shoes and committed to the Catholic Protectory. Released September, 1906.

December 12, 1906.....Arrested for stone throwing and committed to the Catholic Protectory. Released January, 1908.

May 1, 1908.....Arrested for burglary—stole iron fixtures from a vacant house. Paroled.

June 23, 1908..... Charged with truancy. Committed to the Catholic Protectory. Released December 14, 1909.
April 23, 1910.....Arrested. Hearing 25th. Fined $1.00.
January, 1911.....Arrested for stone-throwing. Sent to the truant school.

One of the most important elements in the problem is the attitude of parents toward the commitment of a child. Perhaps most of them resent it and look upon it as a misfortune and a disgrace. The very fact of commitment is denied if possible; the boy is "in the country," or he is "visiting relatives." The parents are anxious to have him home again as soon as the term is up or an application will be accepted.

Another group of families take a commitment with the same indifference with which they accept all the other unavoidable facts of life. If babies die, or the husband is out of work, or the children are sent away for a couple of years, it is all a part and parcel of the inevitable, all equally removed from choice and regret. Often the parents are so busy earning a meager living that they hardly know where the children are passing their time, and so the boys develop into rowdies who spend their nights on roofs or stairs and their days in loafing. Victims of drunkenness, need, and sickness, they do not know the meaning of discipline, and it rarely occurs to their families that they can do anything in the matter, much less that they ought to.

More rarely the judge has to deal with a parent who sees in the court the child's best chance of improvement. This happens chiefly in cases where the father or mother is at work away from home, and cannot be personally responsible for the children's attendance at

school. The father of one of our boys, for instance, was a skilled English waiter, whose wife had died some years before. His oldest daughter kept house, but the two younger boys were beyond her control. The father recognized the danger of their becoming increasingly delinquent through his absence and the influence of the neighborhood, and therefore allowed them to be placed in the truant school as a safeguard.

Indeed, a large part of the trouble with the children comes from the impossibility of proper supervision by the parents. The absence of the father or mother is a prolific cause of delinquency. The women say, "He was all right until his father died"; or, "I can't do nothin' with him since my man's sick"; or, "Since my husband went to all-night work in the slaughter house, Jimmy and Tommy are always out late"; or, "I go out to scrubbin' at five o'clock in the mornin' and there's nobody to give the children breakfast and chase them to school." In other instances, the prospect of the long summer's vacation spent idling on the streets makes the mother uneasy, and she asks the judge to "put him away until school begins to keep him off the streets." At other times the parents grow discouraged at the strain of gang influence as against family discipline and tell the judge to send the boy up "as his last chance to be decent." They occasionally have masses said for the improvement of the child under commitment and hope great things from his return home, sobered down by a year or two of routine life. In these cases, the parents have given the problem the most intelligent thought of which they are capable and have concluded that the institution is a preferable alternative to the home and the streets.

Again, there is a group of families who use commitment for their own purposes. They are usually very poor and seek by this means to make provision for children whom they are unable to support. In some of these instances, the parents had made an effort to have the boy committed as a dependent. Failing in this, they had then brought him into court on the charge that he was "ungovernable" and was "in danger of becoming morally depraved." In other cases, the mother of a child who will not stir himself to find a job, or will not hand over his pay envelope at the end of the week, tells the judge to send him up, as she "has only bad of him." In all these cases, the children have somehow or other proved a burden, and the parents utilize the court to relieve themselves of a responsibility which, for a time, they are unable to meet. When these children come of age, or are sufficiently disciplined to go to work, there is generally an application for their release. The connection between the lack of earning power and the commitment is an obvious one.

But whatever attitude the different families took toward the juvenile court, whether they were resentful, or apathetic, or whether they co-operated with the court or used it for their own purposes, it was certainly true that the more intelligent and disinterested element in the district was strongly against commitment. Temporary improvement there may have been, but little if any permanent help resulted.

Wherein, then, lay the weakness of the method of commitment employed? First, let us examine the histories of boys whose lives showed notable improvement after the sentence. There were two such boys, in par-

ticular, who had been distinctly "bad" boys before their sojourn in the institution.

Martin Donnelly was one of the "successful" institution cases. His mother "lived out" as a cook, and he stayed with an aunt and uncle who had no children of their own. His aunt said he was "a merry little grig" until about his eleventh year, when "he began to know too much." He began to smoke, play truant, fib, and avoid his home. Entreaties or punishment merely made matters worse, and the notices from school and officers became numerous. Martin set his whole gang as spies upon his aunt, stole out of the back door when she had followed him to school, and generally so upset the family that it was an actual relief to them when his petty thieving finally landed him in the Protectory. He stayed away for months, and returned much sobered down. His aunt said that he hardly spoke aloud when he first returned, and that he "went about so quiet" whereas he used to "racket down the stairs as if the house was afire." Soon after his return events proved his friend, for his mother remarried and settled in the country. He was taken into a new environment and given a steady job. Ten months later he was still faithfully at work and proud of his weekly six-dollar pay envelope. Further report said there was not a gang of boys within a mile of him, and that he was safely out of trouble. In this instance the commitment made a break in the life with the gang, but it was left to mere chance events to complete the break.

A still more exceptional case was that of Stephen Waters. He had been involved in all kinds of trouble and had a court record. At the age of thirteen he had been arrested for burglary but had been allowed to go

free. A half year later he had quit school entirely and had spent all his time on the streets. Arrested for theft and committed to the Catholic Protectory, he had escaped after three days and it was almost a year before he returned to finish his sentence. In spite of all this, Stephen was not really a vicious boy. He was merely weak and feared a beating if he did not follow the gang. Upon his discharge from the Protectory he decided to change his life. He left his family, took a room on the East Side, and obtained a regular job driving an express wagon. At the time of our inquiry he had been steadily at work for a year.

These two boys, then, were exceptional cases in which commitment, combined with other circumstances, had actually and radically accomplished its purpose. The discipline of institutional life had been followed by a total separation from old comrades and by steady work. In both cases, fortunate circumstances combined with the effects of commitment produced happy results.

On the other hand, the boys who return to the old streets and the old gangs have not much chance for progressive improvement. In the Doyle gang, for instance, we had eleven boys who had all been serious delinquents and who had been committed to institutions, some of them many times over. It is true that several of these terms had been short, determinate ones, but every one of these boys had had a longer commitment also. The leader of the Doyle gang came from an entirely respectable family. The father, a steady and reliable man, had set a very fair example of conduct to the boys. But Mrs. Doyle was a "slack" mother at home and shielded her boys continually from any discipline from outside, including the school. Pro-

ceeding on the principle that "there has to be a black sheep in every family," she had achieved the distinction of being the mother of five of the "wildest" boys in the neighborhood. All five of the Doyle boys were enrolled in "tough" gangs, and even the two youngest were bad influences in the neighborhood. Even six-year-old Dennis one day opened the school door, and, with all his childish strength, hurled a stone into the hall full of children. All of these boys had a sophisticated air and a certain hard look of withdrawal when in the presence of teachers or strangers, or, indeed, of anybody outside the gang.

Raymond Doyle, the oldest of the brothers, was sixteen. He was described by the principal of the school as "having energy enough to supply ten boys." He made cat's-paws of those that were weaker than he, and domineered over even the stronger spirits of his gang. In fact, he had been one of the very worst influences, and responsible for a great many lawless happenings in the street.

In May, 1906, he was arrested for robbing a grocery store, but there was no complaint and he was discharged. Later on in the same year he was arrested on some unknown charge, and fined $5.00. At this time his continual truancy became too serious to be ignored and he was committed to the New York Truant School. Mrs. Doyle resented this action and immediately transferred the other children from the public school to the parochial school.

Raymond was released from the truant school in 1907, but was not long out of trouble. He was in company with John Larrabie and the two Rafferty boys when Larrabie threw a brick and killed an organ

grinder. He escaped arrest for his complicity in this affair, but six months later he was again in court, this time on a charge of burglary. Together with two other boys, he had broken a pane of glass in a stationery store and had run away with some fishing tackle and two baseballs. The boys were put on parole and later the sentence was suspended for all three.

In the fall of the same year, Raymond conceived a bold plan for outwitting the truant officer. He persuaded George Riley to join him, and together they arranged a home on one of the tenement roofs. Here they lived for three months, stealing enough food for their needs or money to buy it and going down to the streets only when necessary. One day in January, when life must have been growing chilly out of doors, George Riley was caught stealing a dozen eggs. He was taken down to court, and sent to the Protectory on his former record. Raymond was clever enough to escape without even an arrest. A year and a half after this episode, in August, 1909, Raymond was again in court, this time on a charge of petty larceny. He was discharged. Four months later he was involved with his brother Patrick and another boy in a very serious burglary and re-committed to an institution.

Patrick Doyle, his brother, had also had a grave delinquency history. It is true that Patrick was not considered an instinctively wayward child and might have been influenced for better at the proper time and by the use of wise methods. But under his brother's unchecked leadership his mischievous tendencies had led him into lawless ways, and the court's way of dealing with him did not prove reformative. At the age of nine he was brought into the public school by the truant

officer, but the next day he ran out during the session and did not return. Toward the end of that year, 1908, he was arrested for stealing bread from a wagon. Three months later he was caught with Matthew Rooney in the burglary of a grocery store, and paroled for two months. After one month of this parole had expired he was caught again in another burglary and committed to the Catholic Protectory for three months on account of having violated his parole. Six months after he had been discharged from this commitment he and his brother Raymond, and a third member of their gang were caught stealing in an apartment—the serious case mentioned above—and all three were sent away for long terms.

The circumstances of this burglary were secured from various sources—the court records, the newspapers, the school, and neighborhood gossip—all of the accounts tallying in an unusually neat and accurate way. Raymond and Patrick Doyle took Charlie Muller in tow and broke into a neighbor's apartment in search of anything that could be readily converted into money. They found a trunk standing in a corner and turned the contents upside down upon the floor. From the pile they selected a few articles of underwear and a watch. They took a gun that was lying on a chair and snatched up a canary bird in its cage. As they turned to go, they were confronted by the older son of the family, who had returned from work and was standing in the doorway. One of the boys, this young man declared, "pulled a knife for him," so that he "ran for his life." On the corner of the street he found a policeman, who took his address and promised to send a detective. Meanwhile the boys came out of his house

and went to a restaurant, where they were subsequently taken in charge by the detective. The judge sentenced two of the boys to the House of Refuge and one to the Protectory, each for fifteen months. Raymond, after his discharge, refused to work and spent his time loafing at his usual "hang-outs."

The attitude of the neighbor whose apartment had been entered was significant. The older son, Samuel, who had arrived at the climax and intercepted the gang, was very vindictive. He appeared in the children's court as complainant and did all in his power to secure the three convictions. On the other hand, Samuel's brother and sister wished to hush the matter up or, at least, to keep it out of court. "All boys will be wild and these are little things and mean nothing. They just wanted nickels for moving pictures." Reasoning in this way, according to the easy-going standards of the neighborhood, they tried to dissuade Samuel from going to court and appearing against the boys.

Charles Muller, who was sent to the House of Refuge with Patrick Doyle, came from a respectable home. His father had been dead for many years and the family income consisted of the wages of his mother and older sisters. Before the girls had become old enough to earn the family has passed through a period of the direst poverty. Charlie was not an ungovernable lad. On the contrary, he had a weak and sullen disposition and was often used as a tool by his comrades. His first arrest was for playing craps in the street, and he was put on what his mother called "patrole." A son-in-law went down to court and "paid $5.00 to a red-headed lawyer fellow who said he could get him off, and did

so." Some time later he stayed away from school for seven weeks without his family's knowledge, always coming in regularly at lunch time and pretending to go back to classes. At this time his mother had a stroke of paralysis, and he took advantage of her lameness to disregard the previous rules about bedtime, meals, and so on. He was arrested again, and this time it was the daughter who paid the lawyer $5.00. In the last arrest, for the apartment burglary, the family refused to re-engage this man, and, according to Mrs. Muller's vehement declaration, "every boy in court that day was sent away for fifteen months, Charles among the rest."

Joseph McGratty was another of the Doyle gang who was first arrested at the age of nine. The McGratty family was supported by the father, who was a street-cleaner, and by an older son who was a jockey. Joseph's irregularities began with truancy and his first arrest was for petty larceny. On this occasion he was discharged. Shortly afterward he applied for a transfer from his school on the ground that his family were moving to a certain address in West Twenty-sixth Street. The story of the moving was entirely untrue, and Joseph never presented his transfer at any other school. The school has since learned that the McGrattys were still living at their old address, but it has never been able to lay hands upon Joseph by any means in its power and force him to attend. He has been arrested for stone throwing, for theft, for larceny of an automatic clock in company with the notorious Rafferty boys, and twice for burglary, the first time in company with the brother of the gang leader. His last arrest sent him to the Catholic Protectory.

John Larrabie, who killed an organ grinder, was no worse than several of his gang. His family was degraded and desperately poor. The father drank and the mother was given to loud-voiced harangues and to calling maledictions down upon neighbors who displeased her. John came to school ugly-tempered and resentful. At a rebuke from his teacher he attempted to jump out of the window. One day as he stood on a roof with Raymond Doyle and the two Rafferty boys, the quartette spied in the street below a couple of Italian organ grinders with whom they were carrying on a feud. Loose bricks were at hand for missiles and in an instant John Larrabie had thrown one at the "ginnies." The boys saw one of the men drop in the street—the victim died, in fact, only a few minutes later—and two of them escaped across the roofs. The other two, Larrabie and Joe Rafferty, were caught and taken to court on a charge of felonious assault. They were remanded for four days and then discharged to the coroner. The court records show that John Larrabie was rearrested at the coroner's for manslaughter, that his guilt was patent, but that no complaint was taken. Four months later he was committed to the Catholic Protectory, at his father's instance, as an ungovernable child, his father being ordered to pay $2.00 a week toward his support in the institution.

The brothers Riemer, Henry and Alexander, were two of the "wildest" boys of this gang. Both were incorrigible truants. They were arrested in November, 1906, for stealing coal from a neighbor's cellar and were paroled. In February, 1907, Alexander was sent to the Protectory for three months for stealing a chicken from the Washington Market. Four months after his

discharge he was re-committed for nearly a year's term. Shortly after this, in April, 1909, he was arrested for stone throwing, fined $1.00, and imprisoned one day. In November he was arrested for assaulting another boy. As he had been away from home four days, and from school a week, and had been involved in the theft of a pair of gloves, and also because his mother recommended commitment, he was sent to the Protectory for a third term. He was not discharged until of working age, when the family secured him a job directly under his father's supervision. Henry Riemer was arrested several times with his brother, and also twice for theft, once for striking a boy over the head with a pistol, and once for injuring property. He saved himself from a commitment in one affair, a glove robbery, by informing on Harry Rafferty and sending the latter to the Protectory on his evidence. He himself had had two terms there, and was still under commitment up to date.

The report of this extraordinary gang can fitly be ended by a description of two of its most conspicuous members, Joe and Harry Rafferty. Their home was the scene of continuous brawling. The floors were littered with broken crockery, with ham bones, and glass—with anything that could be used as missiles. The father and mother were drunkards, although both had taken the pledge at times to obtain charitable relief. After the father's death from typhoid the conditions grew still more serious. Joe "beat up" his mother cruelly whenever there had been beer in the house, and Mrs. Rafferty at last deserted her family for several months in order to go and live on a sympathetic neighbor, leaving the small children to shift for themselves. When she returned home it was to bring

back a "boarder" with whom she lived in immoral relations.

The records of the Rafferty boys were, of course, very bad. Joe was taken to the court with John Larrabie at the time of the killing of the Italian organ grinder. The neighborhood reported that Joe, who was over sixteen, "saved his own skin by turning state's evidence." The fact that there was no record of Joe Rafferty in the court history of the case does not necessarily contradict this statement. Certain it is that he was credited with having "snitched" by the neighborhood and also by the rest of his gang. The boy fully believed that the latter intended to "do him up" and that his only chance for safety was to leave the city.

Harry Rafferty's teacher described him as "a little dock rat who is usually dressed in rags and with the skin of his face half torn off because of his many fights." He had always been a bad truant. In 1908 he was arrested twice, once for stealing boards from a wagon, and once for stealing two loaves of bread. In April, 1909, he and Matthew Rooney, mentioned above as an associate of Patrick Doyle in thieving, ran off with a clock stolen out of a waiting automobile. Harry was committed to the Catholic Protectory for three months. In July he was discharged, and in November he was recommitted for stealing a pair of gloves with Henry and Alexander Riemer. This second commitment was also for a short term, and soon after his release he was once more in court on a minor charge. In October he was sent to the Protectory for his third term.

In the face of these facts it was astonishing to find that these boys were not completely ruined; that, in-

deed, there was something distinctly worth while in both Joe and Harry. Of course, their records were very bad, and both were growing less sensitive to moral control with the years. But Joe had an instinct of family loyalty and had struggled hard to keep his brothers and sisters together. He had visited and written them when they were sent away to institutions, and had turned up promptly to take charge of them on the day of their release. This affection and protective instinct had been his only anchor, and the necessary breaking up of the family, consequent on the mother's immorality, had promised to deprive him of his last motive to reform.

The Rafferty family was one in which vice, drunkenness, and squalor had combined to misshape the lives of the children. The law should have proved the salvation of the good qualities that in some miraculous way still existed in that atmosphere. It is obvious, however, that the law's method in such extreme cases —the frequent commitment—had failed to change the conduct of these boys and to accomplish any reformation in their lives.

Commitment ought to induce a radical alteration of life. But in many of our cases the commitments merely proved interludes in wrongdoing. Even a temporary improvement after discharge was not met with; the dates of the subsequent offenses followed closely upon liberation. In the face of such records a comparatively short commitment, followed by the return of the boy to the same neighborhood without any official supervision and guidance, seems futile indeed. The histories recorded here indicate clearly that with few exceptions

neither boy nor family nor community had been benefited by the action of the court.

It must be conceded that this district is exceptionally lawless and gang-ridden and that the gang which we have described was one of the worst in the whole neighborhood. But what is here presented is not a study of average results of commitments in average cases. Such a study would have necessitated establishing close cooperation with the institutions, in order to follow up those children who had not returned to their old environment at all after commitment, but had been placed out in employment, or adopted into new homes. It is from among these children that the institutions claim the greatest number of their successes, and it would have been necessary to include them if a presentation of the whole problem had been attempted.

On the other hand, since commitment is conceded to be an extreme method of dealing with extreme situations, our examination and our conclusions seem all the more pertinent. To examine the results in the most extreme cases seems to be a perfectly fair way of testing the working of the system. If a method particularly planned for helping the worst cases of delinquency does not help them, we must question the use of the method in these cases, at least, and ask what we should substitute for it.

V. SUMMARY

Reviewing our study of the three groups of boys described in the preceding sections—the boy who is let go, the boy who is paroled in the custody of his parents, and the boy that gets sent up—we find that the impression made by the court was rarely a permanent one.

One after the other we have seen how the typical boy of each group passes through the hands of the court and returns to his West Side environment scarcely changed by his experience. For the boy who is let go, it means but a ripple in his life. The court again goes further and "paroles" him. At the end, he is still the same boy. The most drastic treatment of all, commitment to an institution for a definite short term usually fails to remake the character of a boy who has been subjected both before and after his sojourn in the institution to the full force of the neighborhood influences. When a boy is so difficult to manage that commitment becomes the only adequate remedy, the term should be indefinite so that release may depend on education, behavior and development of character. And release should be followed by supervision by a representative of the court or of the institution until the boy shows that he can stand morally without such assistance.

A well organized official probation staff without doubt furnishes the most effective method for dealing with most of these cases. This applies to all three classes described in the preceding sections—the boy who is let go, the boy who is paroled in the custody of his parents, and the boy that gets sent up. The use of official probation does not necessarily exclude volunteer probation, but it should make possible careful supervision and coordination of volunteer work under the court.

Our study points out the necessity of recognizing both the family unit and the neighborhood unit in handling cases. In order to do efficient probation work, the investigator must be familiar with local conditions. He needs to know, on the one hand, all the influences which have helped to make the boy what he is, and, on the

other hand, the neighborhood agencies which are familiar with his individual and family history, and may be enlisted in reforming him.

A thorough physical and mental examination is necessary in many cases before the court can proceed intelligently in its treatment.* A fundamental need also in the treatment of juvenile delinquency is the conferring of equity powers on the court, in order to avoid the hindrances of purely criminal trials and to reach the child and his family more directly.

Finally, we must not forget, in considering the darker aspects of the extreme cases presented in the section on commitments, that all delinquent boys are not of that type. As a rule, the boy delinquent stands out among the ranks of mishandled West Side youngsters only as one of them who has had the misfortune to be apprehended where others equally guilty have escaped; in most cases he does not differ in any great degree from his mates. Viewed from the standpoint of the district and in the light of what we know of its manner of life, juvenile delinquency is seen to be largely the product of conditions dangerous to youth in the homes and on the streets. To deal with the boy only after he has committed a crime is to deal with the product and not at all with the source of his offending; to allow him to return to his old surroundings without official supervision and control is, except in rare instances, a futile expedient.

* In 1913 a law was enacted for the appointment of three physicians to examine children for mental defectiveness. As the Civil Service Commission refused to declare the positions exempt, however, no appointments were made; but an examination will undoubtedly be held to make up a list of physicians from which these offices may be filled. In the meantime the children's court judge sends many children to the clinic conducted by Dr. Max Schlapp in connection with the Post-Graduate Hospital.

CHAPTER VII

THE CENTER OF THE PROBLEM

IN studying the boy of the Middle West Side we are studying the future as well as the present of his district; and in gathering together for a composite picture his various traits which have already been noted, it will not be out of place to refer once more to certain neighborhood characteristics which he reflects as well as to some aspects of his life and environment which have not as yet been illustrated. In this volume we wish mainly to present the boy as he is today, not to suggest the method of his regeneration. But an attempt to account for his peculiarities naturally results in deductions which may seem to argue a basis for some definite plan of reform; and with an increasing intimacy with West Side conditions it becomes more and more difficult to resist the conclusion that many of his vices are forced upon him by circumstances so strong as to be almost unavoidable.

Stealing, for instance, the theft of anything, but especially of coal and wood, is, as we have seen, encouraged; it is looked upon absolutely as a matter of course. The boy is brought up to consider it part of the daily routine;* the winter cold drives home his family's need for heat, yet the family income is too slender to allow the purchase of coal. His mother sends him out to get fuel, and he knows that somehow he must find it. The

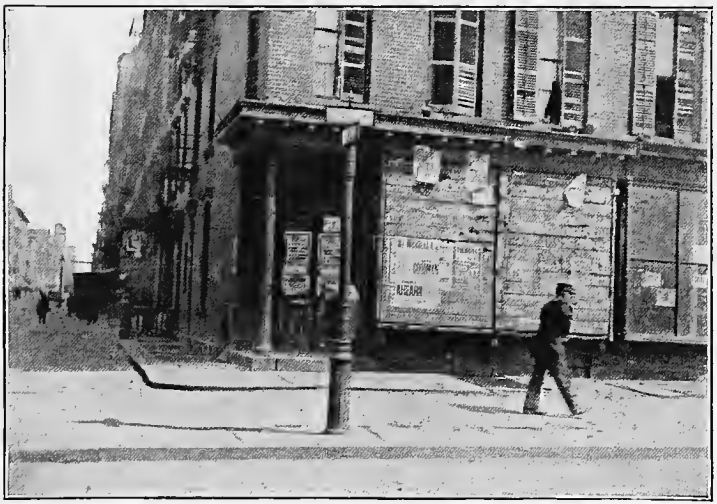
* See also Anthony, Katharine: Mothers Who Must Earn, p. 9.

line of least resistance is worn smooth in his neighborhood, and it is natural and easy to fall in with the parental fiction that the fuel which reaches the tenement has miraculously dropped from heaven.

This fiction does not apply, however, to the more general "swipin'" or "crookin'" which consists in stealing on the spur of the moment any unconsidered trifles which may be lying around. Usually things so stolen are small and of little value. Boys start out on "crookin'" expeditions, taking anything edible or vendible that they can lay hands on; and in this they have the example of older fellows, even married men, who will steal in a desultory way whenever they have the chance. "Every time I get a vacant house," said a wrathful real estate agent one day, "it means that I've got to put in new lead pipes, or new faucets, or new gas fixtures, or perhaps all of them. The damned crooks of the neighborhood, young and old, break in and rip them out to sell." And a certain settlement had the same experience. When it was first opened practically every removable thing in the house disappeared, including even the necessaries for meals.

Here again, though such thefts are far less excusable, the boys have a definite point of view. They are quite non-moral and have never learned to consider the question of property. Their code is the primitive code of might and they look upon their booty as theirs by right of conquest. Further, the very pressure of poverty is an incentive to stealing for various ends. They are cigarette fiends—they must have cigarettes. They are hungry; they crave amusement, and "the movin' pictures" mean a nickel. All these things cost money, and when one is penniless and knows no moral code and

Carrying Loot From a Vacant Building



sees one's elders acknowledging none, the temptation to adopt the tactics of the thief and the thug becomes almost irresistible.

Much that these boys think and do is the direct result of their natural propensity to imitate, combined with the fact that they have never been taught the difference between childhood and manhood. Thus they learn to fight, to smoke, to drink as their elders do. Fist fights in the street are of the most common occurrence, particularly among the young men from sixteen to twenty years of age. To "go down to the docks and fight it out" is one method of settling all disputes, whether of politics, love, or personal appearance. Homeric tales are related of some of these combats. A youth of eighteen demands of a bigger man an apology for an alleged insult to the former's sister. The two go behind a sandpile on the docks, where in the presence of a large group of witnesses they fight fiercely for several hours until both are exhausted. Gang fights, as we have said, are frequently settled by a personal fight between two leaders. These fights sometimes end in one or both of the combatants being maimed, and, with the rougher element, occasionally in murder.

The seriousness of a fight between older men in this neighborhood is recognized, and ordinarily every effort is made to separate the fighters before they become committed to fight to the finish. If a man is defeated by the fists of his opponent, he will seize a club, a bottle, a paving stone, or a revolver, if he can get one, and continue the fight with this advantage. Very frequently a street fight between two men results in a feud which will be carried on from day to day, until one or the other is permanently disabled.

Often these feuds result in the destruction of property, which is here an accepted way of "getting even." Tenants who are evicted are not unlikely by way of revenge to do as much damage as they can to the apartment before leaving. If one club is at war with another, it is expected that the stronger will invade the premises of the weaker and smash up furniture and furnishings. Revenge in this district is wreaked primarily upon person; failing that, upon property. And this latter custom has become so prevalent and so much developed that much damage is done from pure maliciousness and from wanton joy of breaking and destroying. "Scenery Burned by Vandals" runs a recent newspaper headline.*

> Vandals destroyed three truckloads of scenery stored last night on "The Farm," in Twelfth Avenue between Thirty-fifth and Thirty-sixth Streets. . . .
>
> Shortly after 11 o'clock last night the first truck was set afire. The scenery was covered with canvas, and when the firemen arrived it was a total wreck. Three hours later the other two trucks were set afire. The trucks also were burned, and the total loss was estimated at $7,000.

Such outrages are quite common. They are merely a development of the method employed by West Side toughs for "getting a come-back"; merely a warning of the fact that the district owns to no law but the law of the Texan or Corsican Vendetta. Does someone habitually steal clothes from the wash-line? Then the husband "lays for" him with a club. Does some man or boy strike a boy on the street? The mother, or father, or big brother goes down to "get even." Fear and gang ethics forbid the giving of information, and the whole neighborhood is saturated with treachery and suspicion.

* New York *Evening Mail*, April 28, 1911.

With examples of this kind all around him, what wonder that the boy fights often and recklessly; that he turns naturally to violence; and that his combats, singly or in gangs, make no demands on the spirit of fair play?

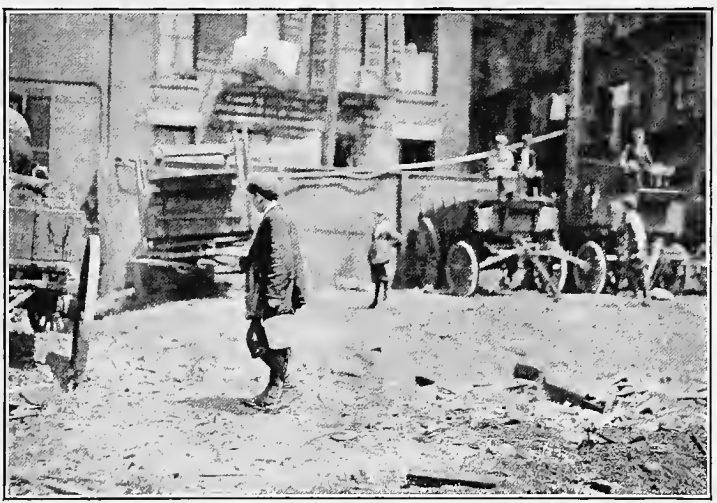
With regard to smoking, the little West Sider's indulgence is entirely unrestrained. On the streets, with his gang, and often in his home, he smokes incessantly from about the time that he is six years old; though, of course, to a stranger or a settlement worker he will deny that he has ever touched a cigarette. A boy's club in the neighborhood recently insisted that its members be allowed to smoke during club meetings. All of them said that they smoked at home and with their parents' full knowledge. These were boys ranging from ten to fourteen years of age. In another club, a boy of thirteen said that it was impossible for him to refrain from smoking more than half an hour at a time when he was out of school. Other boys sided with him, saying that they simply had to smoke. By a vote of the club, however, smoking was abolished during club meetings. After that, this boy went to the roof or hallway to smoke at intervals during the session of the club. His was not an extreme case, although he smoked to greater excess than most of the boys. And in another club, which was formed away from settlement influence, it was found practically impossible to keep the majority of the boys from smoking. They were willing enough to vote to abolish it, but were unable to adhere to the principle which they themselves had established. A few parents objected on principle to their boys' smoking, but they had not the power or opportunity of preventing it. So the cigarette habit is added to the boy's

vices, and the stunted, anemic cigarette fiend is a frequent figure on these streets.

In the same way drinking and intoxication come quite naturally into his life. Beer is a great dinner and supper staple in the tenements, and every day sees a long procession of women, girls, and boys, filing with tin pails to the saloon for the evening drink. Most of the girls make for the "Family Entrance," though many go unblushingly through the screen door to the main saloon and come out a moment later with a foaming pail of beer. Others,—and this is particularly characteristic of the smaller girls,—ask some lounging male of their acquaintance to go in and get the beer for them. The deputy usually rewards himself by a long pull from the pail before he comes out of the saloon. It is astonishing, however, how large a number even of little girls and boys ten years old or less, walk boldly out of the front door with their pails. Almost every saloon has also its line of ragged urchins, crouched on their hands and knees on the stone doorstep, peering under the screen at the crowd within. Occasionally, on gala Saturday nights, a group of men will hold what is known as a "beer racket." Each one contributes a sum of money, fifty cents, a dollar, or sometimes more, to a saloon keeper, who agrees to furnish all the beer they can drink. The party then retires to a convenient neighborhood roof, and keg after keg is sent up until the last drinker has succumbed. Usually one or more boys may be found with the group, overcome with drink.

Little attention is paid by the neighborhood to drunkenness, and among the boys themselves it is regarded as rather a joke for one of their number to become intoxicated. The worst feature of intemperance here is, in-

De Witt Clinton Park
The only city playground on a bright Saturday afternoon



A Favorite Playground
The beer pail is frequently refilled during the game

deed, not the occasional appearance of a boy intoxicated but the indifference with which the adults treat such a spectacle. At the last annual outing of the Tammany leaders in this district a score or more of unaccompanied boys, from ten to fourteen years old, managed by hook or crook to join the excursion party, which counted among its numbers many well known and responsible business men of the neighborhood. From the time the excursion boat left the landing to the time it discharged its passengers, on both incoming and outgoing trips, the excursionists were drenched in a torrent of free beer. Kegs were tapped a dozen at a time, and in pails, in glasses, in trayloads of "schooners," it was rushed to the upper decks so fast that it sometimes went a-begging even among the hundreds of thirsty West Siders. Naturally, the small boys got hold of it, and on the way home a group of them with a gang of immature youths scarcely beyond boyhood themselves, sequestered a couple of kegs in a nook on the after spar deck and actually emptied both kegs. When the boat landed several of them plainly showed the effects of their revel, and one boy of fourteen was helped ashore by his laughing playmates, his legs reeling, his head rolling from side to side, and his eyes staring with the dull vacuity of drunkenness. Among the men, hundreds of whom saw this sight, not a voice was raised in protest; some laughed; some scolded the boys for their intemperance; most watched with cynical indifference, as though this were to be expected.

Thus it is seen that all these vices—drinking, smoking, ruffianism—come very naturally to the West Side boy. Even if he realizes them for what they are, he is ill-fitted to resist them. He sees them all around him

from infancy; and, boylike, he makes them his own through imitation.

Another of the many ways in which this versatile youngster amuses himself is by playing truant.

The equipment of the typical boy of the Middle West Side when he is first sent to school is pitiable. Excessive cigarette smoking, the wrangling atmosphere of the home, the excitement of the street, have sapped his nervous power. He is restless, easily reduced to sulkiness, and exceedingly hard to interest. The varied excitement of the streets, combined with the inevitable cigarette, has lost to him all power of continued thought or concentration. School itself, like the boy, has little chance. Perhaps it is lacking in anything which makes a vital appeal to his nature, but from the first it is handicapped. Not only is the lure of the streets tremendous, but the bewildered school teacher is presented with a child who has been born into ignorance and inexpansibility, reared in an atmosphere of discord and vice, and given every chance of acquiring disastrous physical and moral habits, before ever he reached the class room; and the problem that confronts the teacher is not that of building up a character but of making over one that is already seriously deformed.

The sources of the truancy habit are undoubtedly to be traced in the boy's first acquaintance as an infant with the streets. As we have seen, he is familiar from babyhood with the bustle and confusion of street life and his first pleasurable experiences are associated with it. The atmosphere of the street, its scenes and sounds, permeate the child's whole existence and fasten upon him the shackles of habit. After a year or two of more or less complete subjection of his budding mind to this

influence, the child is expected to exchange without protest the thrilling, lawless streets for the orderly commonplace of the school room. Of course he is attracted by the novelty of the latter for a time, but after that he feels the strain of two conflicting influences—the lure of the street and the instinct of obedience to authority. If he wishes to yield to the street, he has the traditions of generations of truants and any number of conniving playmates to aid him to escape. And here we have the beginnings of the "delinquency" which almost inevitably sooner or later leads him to the juvenile court.*

Here is the confession of a ten-year-old truant, which is typical of school life in the district:

"I used to go to the Fifty-second Street school with Jimmie, but they made me change to Forty-eighth Street because I stayed away so much. I would leave home in the morning at school time and then come up here and play in the streets instead of going to school. I would just hang around the corners with the other boys or go after loot with them. A little while ago, Jimmie and I wanted money, and we got a dog to follow us into a candy store on Eleventh Avenue, and there we tried to sell it. It was a dandy dog, a thoroughbred, but the storekeeper said he had two already and wouldn't buy it. We tried to sell it again but it got away from us. We tried that with another one once but

* For truancy records see Appendix, Table 14, p.173. In classifying the boys studied according to the extent of their truancy, a distinction was made between those who were, according to our standards, really delinquent, and those who were included in the inquiry for some other reason. Data are available for 215 of the 294 boys included in our study.

it was a bum one. Nobody would buy it, and after spending the whole morning trying, we gave it a kick and chased it off. Jimmie and I and a bunch of boys all got a duck apiece in Jersey once and we were able to sell them for fifty cents apiece."

"How do you get over to Jersey without paying?"

"That's easy," said Jimmie, "you go down to de ferry and wait till two or t'ree ladies comes in togeder. One of 'em gits two or t'ree tickets for the bunch, and you step right up in front of the first lady, like you was her son. The gateman sees the tickets in her hand, and then you beat it, while she's tryin' to explain to the gateman. Coming back is easier still, 'cos you can always sneak through the wagon, or express, or employes' entrances there."

"When our whole family goes to Jersey," went on the narrator, "all of us kids sneak in that way. My father buys tickets and then we walk through the gates and he refuses to pay for us because he don't know us. Just now it is too cold to go to Jersey much, or do anything but keep in school. Besides I'm on parole now. I have to have a good conduct card and have to go and see Mr. Carson once in so often and tell him about what I'm doin'."

Truancy here is developed into a system, which the youngsters can adjust to any occasion with the greatest facility. If you start to school with your books in the morning it is an easy matter to leave them at a candy store or with a friend, and put in the morning furthering your own interests on the docks or in the streets. If a truant officer asks you your name or your business on the streets, one name is as good as another,—if it is far enough from your own; and there are many plausible

reasons for being out of school, if you can avoid having to prove them. A placating note to your teacher written by yourself is as good as one by your mother, if you can only make the teacher believe that your mother wrote it. After two or three days in the street, it is necessary to maintain a strict watch over the mail box, if you would beat your parents to the truant officer's notice which will sooner or later be found therein. This notice can be removed from the box by the judicious use of a bent pin, and communication between the school and the home is thus indefinitely postponed.

Once these details are arranged, the streets of New York are open to the boys for a holiday. Money, while not an absolute necessity, is much to be desired, and there are many ways of obtaining it,—witness the statement of "Jimmie's" friend, above. It is against the law for boys under fourteen years to work, and the greater number of employers to whom they apply do their best to make this law effective; in any case, labor as a financial resource makes no strong appeal. But there are things to sell if you can only get hold of them without being caught. Pennies may be begged, or stolen from other and smaller children. Similarly food may be begged when necessary, or obtained unobtrusively from fruit stand and grocery counters. Jimmie's friend is by no means the only boy who starts for school regularly every morning and very often does not return before nine or ten o'clock at night, staving off the pangs of hunger (which often seems to be the only form of homesickness known in this district) through the resources here described.

Akin to truancy is the "wanderlust." This passion to get out and away, travel, and court adventure, comes

to the boy of the Middle West Side as it comes to most boys—and often he obeys its call. The resulting experiences are usually only a short and amusing incident in his life; very rarely do they lead to a permanent change. One young adventurer told of a characteristic trip:

"Denny Murphy came over to our house one morning last summer and said, 'Red, let's beat it.' 'Sure,' I said, 'where to?' 'Out west,' Denny said. I did not have anything else to do and I thought it would be a good thing to go west. So that afternoon, Denny and I went over to Jersey City. Denny had some money. I don't know where he got it, but he probably stole it, for he was always crazy about robberies; talked about 'pulling off' robberies and things of that kind, and I knew he had been in some hold-ups. We were going to go to Philadelphia first, but I thought we needed more money and could probably get a job in Paterson. So we took a freight train to Paterson. Got there in the evening and I tried for a job in the factory. I told the man I had been getting six dollars a week in another factory and told him I lived in Paterson, but the manager caught me lying about where I lived and fired me out. So Denny and I slept that night in the doorway of that same factory.

"In the morning we both looked around for a job, but there was nothing doing. Finally I got on a barge and they were going to take me on there washing dishes and being cabin boy, but there was nothing for Denny to do, and the boat was going up the river instead of down, so there wasn't any use in our staying there; so that night Denny came in and we slept on the back of the boat. Denny had some more money now—No, I

don't know where he got it—and we went over to Jersey City again on the trolley car. Then we caught a freight train for Philadelphia. The cars were locked and we had to climb clear up and ride on top. We got down to some town just the other side of Trenton before a brakeman saw us and booted us off, and then we had to wait there the rest of the afternoon and get on a coal car which took us to Philadelphia. We spent that night in a freight car and then got on another freight train out in the West Philadelphia yards and started west. We climbed in a box car marked 'Springfield, Ohio,' shut the door, and I went to sleep. When I woke up it was daylight, and the car was in another city. I supposed it was Springfield but it wasn't; it was only Harrisburg. We walked all around the town, but we couldn't find anything to do, and finally we got out of money. Along about dark we saw a bellboy, we thought he was, coming out of a hotel. He was a 'coon' in uniform, so we thought he must be a bellboy. Then Denny said, 'Here's our chance to get money.' He said we could take a club and come up behind and blackjack the coon and rob him. So we came up in the dark and just as we got close up behind him, he turned around and we saw that he was not a bellboy at all but a policeman. I never knew before they had 'coon' policemen anywhere.

"Denny and I beat it for the railroad as fast as we could go. We did not wait to eat or anything, but caught a freight train that we saw moving, and when we got on we found we were bound for Philadelphia again. In the car with us was a 'coon' bumming like we were. He wanted to know who we were and where we were going. We told him we were just looking around the country, and he wanted to take us south with him. He

said the Southern people were mighty fine people and would surely give us good jobs if we would go with him as far as Atlanta. We had come back from the west now and we thought we might as well go south as anywhere else, so we told him we would go with him. Then I went to sleep again and when I woke up there wasn't any coon any more. He had beat it somewhere and left Denny and me behind.

"We got off the train at a little station called Overbrook, just outside of Philadelphia, and just as we hit the cinders, two railroad detectives jumped out from behind the switchhouse and grabbed us both and that ended our western trip.

"They took us into the city to the House of Detention, where we stayed over that night and the next two or three days. There was a man there who treated us fine and made us tell all about ourselves, and after two or three days he put us on a passenger train and sent us back to New York. I've never tried to go west since."

Parties and dances, now and then a "grand annual ball" or "fête" at a dance hall or casino, an occasional visit to a moving picture show, one or two dilapidated poolrooms, and the sordid and ever-present saloon—these are practically the only amusements definitely offered to the West Side boy. And as he casts about for means to supplement them it is natural for him to turn early to indulgence in sexual immorality, which he has seen and heard talked of in the tenement and the street since he began to be old enough to notice anything. His sense of modesty has been strangled at birth. All round him he is accustomed to hear obscene terms, the meaning of which any older person will freely explain in a way which robs them of any moral sig-

nificance whatever. There are plenty of "big fellers" and "wise girls" on the streets to teach him anything that he wishes to know. In the tenements themselves immoral practices are common even among small children, with the full knowledge of everyone except their parents, who are nevertheless apathetically aware of the sins of their neighbors' children. In a number of ways the boys here learn, not the truth about reproduction, for that is very little known here, but about sexual enjoyment and its many forms of perversion, topics which occupy a large share of the mind of adolescent youth in this environment. Children of both sexes indulge freely in conversation which is only carried on secretly by adults in other walks of life. Certain roofs in the neighborhood have a name as rendezvous for children and young couples for immoral practices.

In common with other districts of the city the neighborhood has many sexual perverts, and these furnish an actual menace to the children. As infants, practically, the boys have heard the same stories repeated until they regard sexual matters as forbidden, of course,——and therefore, like smoking cigarettes and gambling, to be hidden from parents, police, or other authorities,——but with no sense of abhorrence. Knowledge of the methods of the perverts, on the other hand, leads to experimentation among the boys, and to the many forms of perversion which in the end make the degenerate. Self-abuse is considered a common joke, and boys as young as seven and eight actually practice sodomy. Every night the doorways are blocked with girls from fourteen to twenty years of age who lean against the walls and rails, and talk with the young men, the "talk" occasionally degenerating into a laughing scuffle. Girls

as a rule are never mentioned by the boys except in club-room stories of the grossest immorality.

Universally these boys lack stamina—physical, mental, moral. They are incapable of prolonged exertion; a minute or two of fast boxing exhausts them completely, and only the exceptional ones are able to box continuously for more than two or three rounds. Their baseball teams are too apt to "blow up" in the fourth or fifth inning, no matter what individual cleverness some of the members may have shown, because the players are so shortwinded and feeble of limb. There are, of course, a number of well developed athletes among them, but a boy of normal physique stands out far above his playmates, and those of exceptional skill are few indeed.

Their mental energies are scattered and undependable. They are incapable of prolonged thought upon any one subject, and lack absolutely the concentration which mental discipline can impart. Quick they may be and clever, but they are seldom deep, and through years of mental inaction they seem unable to grasp anything like an abstract idea or principle. Of any except the simplest and most exciting card games they quickly tire.

The lack of moral stamina is even more evident. They are totally unable to resist physical temptation of any sort. In fact, their training seems to offer them no basis of resistance. They are accustomed to striving not to overcome but to gratify every desire. Lack of privacy and the hopelessly unmoral attitude of the neighborhood toward all matters of sex have left them without any moral standards. In deceit and treachery, the use of superior force and of unfair advantage, they see nothing to be avoided or ashamed of. Revenge and the fiercest

retaliation for real or fancied injury, accidental or otherwise, are part of their code. Their life is a struggle for self-preservation, and they are naturally consummately selfish; for the feelings of others they have not the slightest thought. Calloused into unmorality they are unconcernedly cruel, and such a thing as the killing of some boy in a gang fight will be related in a perfectly matter-of-fact manner. They have no respect for age or authority.

Two types of boy are common in these streets, widely dissimilar, but equally pathetic. The first is the boy who wants to "make good," but cannot shake off the shackles of association and environment; the boy "who'd make something of himself yet if given half a show." Since leaving school and going to work he has perhaps gone through the process known as "steadying down" and "getting sensible." Between the years of fourteen and seventeen there may have come a loosening of the old gang ties, a change, and a reshaping. A later period seems to come when after the excitements of his adolescent years he may realize, as to the loafing and depredations into which he has drifted, that "there's nothing in it." Sometimes even a boy from a down-at-the-heels and shiftless family makes a desperate effort to pull up. But he lacks the tremendous energy to struggle through the bad name he has gotten by his own career and by identification as "one of that crew." His bitterness is natural. "Oh, I know—that is another of those Fifty-third Street stories about Charlie Harris. I've heard enough of them." Such a boy is most susceptible at this time to home and outside influence, and if only the opportunity can be taken it will be not unlikely to prove the turning point in his life. But too

often there is no one at hand to help him. The West Side boy does not always respond to kindness. He knows little or nothing of it in his life, and his native fickleness and dislike of direction make him, especially after the school age, difficult to handle.

Yet sometimes the effort does succeed. George Ruhl, for instance, was the oldest of three children in a poor German family. Some years ago, when one of the settlement workers first knew him, he was unruly and "difficult" and quite beyond the control of his parents. He refused to go to school, smoked cigarettes, and got into bad company with his gang. When he was twelve years old a settlement worker sent him away to the home of the Salvation Army. The superintendent would not keep him on account of his bad influence upon the other boys. In order to remove him from his gang Miss Summers had him sent to a Boys' Republic. The leader kept him for two years and gained a remarkably good influence over the boy. He then placed George on a farm in Massachusetts. George has turned out well. The owner of the farm, a selectman of the town, treated him like a member of his own family and trusted him with money and other important matters. Finally he rented a farm to George and another boy, and they are prospering. They run a truck farm, raising also chickens, eggs, and squabs. For many years George sent his mother ten dollars a month to pay the rent. In 1909 he offered to take the whole family down to his farm, but Miss Summers advised against this because it would have imposed too much of a burden upon the boy. Here is a case in which outside help at the right time worked wonders; and undoubtedly the same success might result in many others, were there only more

knowledge of the West Side and more voices that would answer to the call. Meanwhile the boy "who can't make good" is still with us.

The second type commands pity but deserves few excuses. It is the boy who refuses to make good. When a boy goes to work even the lax discipline of the irregularly attended school is absent. West Side boys are not in demand, and his job is often that of an extra "hand," easily turned off, or else it is of a "blind alley" nature. His delinquency, however, cannot be considered the effect of his job, for boys of this type naturally seek for a low grade of employment.* In a fit of temper or idleness he surrenders his job; perhaps he loses it unwillingly. Whole days of enforced freedom will follow. One day in the streets between weeks of monotonous hardship in the factory may demoralize a boy. Possibly he hears of another position, which he thinks will be easier and pay more than the one he has. So he drops his former job and takes the new one. Before he has been in his new position long, the memory of his day of idleness on the street overcomes him, and with a little money in his pocket he quits his position, and this time he does not hunt up a new one until all his money is spent. The next logical step is to try to obtain food and money as long as possible without working for it. And so step by step has evolved the habitual loafer and hanger-on of saloons, the young man who brags that he does not earn a living and does not have to earn one. Two boys known to our workers went through this process and are now young men. Both live off the earnings of mother and sister, and indeed, one of them ordered his

* For occupations and wages of the boys who were at work see Appendix, Table 15, p. 174.

sister to go to work "or else how could he live?" The other blacked his sister's eyes over a similar discussion. Such things are common on the Middle West Side.

Both of these types are direct and logical products of neighborhood conditions, just as many of the ways in which the boy finds his recreation simply announce the fact that he must invent for himself what his home fails to provide. The boy's inner life is bleak and wretched because every normal instinct of youth, all the qualities of which future men are made, have been sapped and stunted by the gray, grim neighborhood in which even play is crime. There are ten thousand hopeless little tragedies on the Middle West Side today; and our only answer to their appeal is to call for the police.

If the school is at a disadvantage in its labors to build up character, the juvenile court is even more so. A day at court is a transient experience and soon forgotten. Even the effects of months of institutional life are soon outlived under the strong influences of the street and the gang.

Our picture of the West Side boy is now wellnigh complete. Lawless, defiant, a nuisance to his neighbors and a menace to his playmates, it seems as though the future citizen of these streets were little likely to become other than a burden or a detriment to the whole body politic. Certainly he and his gang, taking them as they are, have little to recommend them or help them to offset a notoriety which they have justly gained.

Of course, their days are not on this account all tears and misery. That side of the story has been emphasized because it bears upon the purpose of this study; but if it were the only side these boys would be almost too im-

possible to be real. But they are very real, and very boylike, careless and happy-go-lucky, too young to know—of if they did know to reflect on—what might have been, taking their world as it is, and ingeniously determined to make the best of it and have a "good time," no matter at whose expense. They are quaint little figures, with their rich street vocabulary, their heartless and yet almost innocent paganism, their capacity for achieving the dangerous in amusement though they bump into every corner on the way. Look at the gang ready for baseball; its members do not seem overwhelmed by the burden of juvenile delinquency. Look at the little group "playing hookey" under the dock; fear of the truant officer seems to sit lightly on the shoulders of these boys.

No, comedy is no stranger to the Middle West Side; only it is Meredithian comedy and the laughter which it provokes is thoughtful indeed. And it is assuredly true that if you would see all that is most typical of the West Side boy, if you would see him as expressing what in his life he really is, you must turn your back on comedy and gaze on the sadder picture. Look at the illustrations and see the boy himself; then read the following sketch as the caption under the portrait. It is printed verbatim from the New York *Evening World* of April 10, 1911, and for its truth to life it cannot be bettered.

Johnnie Moran, twelve years old, . . . was arraigned today . . . in the Children's Court.

The boy was taken in charge Saturday night by Detectives Carter and Brown from headquarters, after he had watched his father die of dropsy thirty-six hours previously; after he had seen the body robbed by a playmate; after he himself had taken "de old man's" watch, and had then gone to play in the street as if nothing out of the usual had occurred.

Johnnie is undersized. His chest is sunken and his shoulders slope; his furtive little gray eyes are deep set under a bulging brow, topped by a shock of hair of no particular color; his small fingers are cigarette-stained, and his clothes look as if their origin had been the ash barrel. Here is the story he told an *Evening World* reporter, while swinging his thin legs unconcernedly from a bench in the room above the Children's Court, where the little prisoners were waiting to be called for trial:

"Me old man was sick a week and three days. I didn't know what wuz the matter wid him, and he didn't neither. He just laid around and groaned and his legs swelled awful. His name? He wuz named John, too, and he was a night watchman, when he woiked, down to the dock at Thoity-seventh Street. Yes, sir, he drinked some mostly before he went to work in the evenin'. But it didn't seem to bother him. No, sir, he never treated me bad; hardly ever licked me.

"The old man never had nothing to eat, 'cept what I bringed him the first day he wuz sick. Yes, sir, I went to school every day. I wuz 'fraid the troont-off'cer'd git me. The old man didn't mind—he just stayed by himself. No, sir, nobody come to see him, and he never told me to git nobody. After school I'd play in the streets with the other fellows and I'd git some buns and milk. I didn't want much—wuzn't hungry—and the old man never seemed to want anything."

Johnnie produced a wad of chewing gum from some recess of his jacket and a second later the atmosphere around him reeked with the odor of mint.

"Thursday night," he went on, " he wuz took woise. I slept on a bundle of old things in a corner and in the night I heard the old man git up and go in the kitchen and sit down there. He groaned somethin' awful—like this," and the boy gave a startling imitation, " and I couldn't sleep and I told him to shut up. Then, after a while, he stopped groaning and when I got up to go to school I see he wuz nearly all in.

"He told me to tie a rope around him and try and pull him onto the bed and I did it, but it wuzn't no use. Then I went out and got a roll and a glass o' milk and when I come back he wuz half way onto the bed, and he didn't answer when I spoke to him and shook him. I called him four or five times, but he never answered, and so I went on to school. I didn't want the troont-off'cer to git me.

"Yes, sir, I knowed he wuz dead, but I had to go to school. Then after school was out, I told some of the fellers and two of 'em went up in the room with me, and one of 'em—he wuz a

big boy—took five dollars out of the old man's pocket and I took his watch. The big boy—his name wuz Frank Reede—wouldn't give me none of the five dollars and he and the other kid run away.

"The next day I got hungry and I told the janitor and he told the cops and they come and got me and took the old man's watch to keep for me. Yes, sir, I'm sorry the old man's dead. He wuz good to me. No, sir, me muther is dead. She died when I wuz a year old when we lived in Thoity-thoid Street. I dunno how long we have been living in Thoity-seckin Street. What'll they do with me, Mister?"

What shall we do with him? That is a question which the institutions, the officials, and the people of New York must answer.

APPENDIX

TABLE 1.—SOURCES FROM WHICH THE NAMES OF THE 294 BOYS STUDIED WERE OBTAINED

Source	Names
1909 Court list	202
Big Brother Movement	43
Special club studies	10
Charity Organization Society	8
Additional children of interest in families visited	20
Known through investigators on other topics	6
Known through other children	2
School	1
Church	1
Settlement	1
Total	294

TABLE 2.—AGES OF BOYS[a]

Age	BOYS	
	Number	Per cent
Less than 8 years	1	.3
8 years and less than 10 years	3	1.0
10 years and less than 12 years	24	8.2
12 years and less than 14 years	71	24.3
14 years and less than 16 years	102	35.0
16 years and more	91	31.2
Total	292	100.0

[a] Information is not available as to the ages of two of the 294 boys.

TABLE 3.—LENGTH OF RESIDENCE IN THE DISTRICT OF 183 FAMILIES[a]

Years in district	FAMILIES	
	Number	Per cent
Less than 5 years	13	7.1
5 years and less than 10 years	31	16.9
10 years and less than 15 years	25	13.7
15 years and less than 20 years	26	14.2
20 years and more	88	48.1
Total	183	100.0

[a] Information is not available as to the length of residence in the district of 58 of the 241 families.

TABLE 4.—COUNTRY OF BIRTH OF PARENTS[a]

Country of birth	Fathers	Mothers
United States	81	92
Ireland	64	72
Germany	27	18
Italy	17	15
Scotland	7	8
England	6	4
Sweden	4	4
France	4	2
Austria	3	2
Russia	1	3
Dalmatia	2	2
Roumania	2	1
Armenia	1	1
Switzerland	1	1
West Indies	1	1
Portugal	..	1
Denmark	1	..
Total	222	227

[a] Information is not available as to the country of birth of 19 fathers and 14 mothers in 241 families.

TABLE 5.—NATIONALITY OF AMERICAN-BORN PARENTS [a]

Nationality	Fathers	Mothers
German	28	28
Irish	21	25
American	15	18
English	3	2
Total	67	73

[a] Information is not available as to the nationality of 14 of 81 American-born fathers and of 19 of 92 American-born mothers.

TABLE 6.—TWO HUNDRED FAMILIES CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO NUMBER OF PERSONS IN HOUSEHOLDS AND NUMBER OF ROOMS OCCUPIED [a]

Persons in household	FAMILIES OCCUPYING								All families
	One room	Two rooms	Three rooms	Four rooms	Five rooms	Six rooms	Seven rooms	Eight rooms	
Two	1	..	1	1	1	..	..	..	4
Three	1	3	13	7	1	1	..	..	26
Four	..	1	7	11	6	2	..	..	27
Five	1	3	11	10	2	..	..	..	27
Six	..	3	12	12	10	4	..	..	41
Seven	..	..	4	11	8	1	..	1	25
Eight	..	..	4	17	5	2	..	..	28
Nine	..	..	2	5	3	1	2	..	13
Ten or eleven	..	..	..	1	4	1	..	..	6
Twelve and less than 15	..	..	..	..	1	2	..	..	3
Total	3	10	54	75	41	14	2	1	200

[a] Information is not available as to the number of rooms occupied by one household of three persons, six of four persons, six of five persons, three of six persons, three of seven persons, three of eight persons, one of nine persons, and one of 12 persons; as to the number of persons in two households occupying four rooms; nor as to the number of rooms occupied or the number of persons in 15 households.

TABLE 7.—LIVING CHILDREN IN 231 FAMILIES[a]

Number of living children	FAMILIES	
	Number	Per cent
One	12	5.2
Two	28	12.1
Three	28	12.1
Four	34	14.7
Five	44	19.0
Six	36	15.6
Seven	24	10.4
Eight	17	7.4
Nine	5	2.2
Ten	2	.9
Eleven	1	.4
Total	231	100.0

[a] Information is not available as to the number of children in 10 of the 241 families.

TABLE 8.—STATUS OF MOTHERS IN 222 FAMILIES[a]

Status of mother	MOTHERS	
	Number	Per cent
Living and earning wages	87	39.2
Living and not earning wages	103	46.4
Dead	32	14.4
Total	222	100.0

[a] Information not available as to the status of the mother in 19 of the 241 families.

TABLE 9.—CONJUGAL CONDITIONS OF PARENTS IN 233 FAMILIES [a]

Conjugal condition of parents	FAMILIES	
	Number	Per cent
Parents living together	133	57.1
Father dead, mother living [b]	53	22.7
Mother dead, father living [c]	20	8.6
Both parents living, but separated	15	6.4
Both parents dead	12	5.2
Total	233	100.0

[a] Information is not available as to the conjugal condition of parents in eight of the 241 families.

[b] In eleven cases where the father was dead and the mother living, the mother had remarried and the step-father was with the family.

[c] In four cases where the mother was dead, and the father living, the father had remarried and the step-mother was with the family.

TABLE 10.—RELIEF RECORDS OF 241 FAMILIES

Record	FAMILIES	
	Number	Per cent
Known to have received aid:		
From relief societies	73	30.3
In form of institutional care for children	17	7.1
From other sources	15	6.2
Total	105	43.6
Deducting duplicates [a]	19	7.9
Total	86	35.7
Known not to have received aid	144	59.7
Relief record unknown	11	4.6
Grand total	241	100.0

[a] There were 19 cases in which families were known to have received relief of more than one of the three kinds specified.

TABLE 11.—DURATION OF RELIEF RECORDS OF 73 FAMILIES KNOWN TO HAVE RECEIVED AID FROM RELIEF SOCIETIES[a]

Duration of record	FAMILIES	
	Number	Per cent
Less than 1 year	15	20.5
1 year and less than 2 years	11	15.1
2 years and less than 5 years	10	13.7
5 years and less than 10 years	19	26.0
10 years and less than 15 years	11	15.1
15 years and less than 20 years	4	5.5
20 years and less than 25 years	3	4.1
Total	73	100.0

[a] Information is not at all available as to the duration of the relief records of 13 of the 86 families who were known to have received aid.

TABLE 12.—COURT DISPOSITION OF CASES INVOLVING 454 ARRESTS AFFECTING 259 BOYS AND 221 FAMILIES[a]

Disposition of cases	Arrests	Boys affected	Families affected
Boy let go	260	197	176
Boy paroled	95	83	76
Boy sent up	99	75	67
Total	454	259[b]	221[b]

[a] Information is not available as to the disposition of nine cases involving arrest.

[b] As some of the boys were arrested more times than one, and as some of the families had two or more boys who were arrested, these figures are absolute totals, and not the sums of the other figures in the columns in which they appear.

TABLE 13.—FINAL DISPOSITION OF 92 WEST SIDE PAROLED CASES AND OF 1,492 PAROLED CASES DISPOSED OF BY THE MANHATTAN COURT IN 1909 [a]

Final disposition of case	WEST SIDE CASES		ALL CASES	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Discharged or sentence suspended	78	84.8	1,264	89.5
Committed to institutions	14	15.2	148	10.5
Total	92	100.0	1,412	100.0

[a] Information is not available as to two of the 95 paroled cases and one case was still pending when the study was concluded.

TABLE 14.—TRUANCY RECORDS OF 215 BOYS, CLASSIFIED AS DELINQUENT OR NOT DELINQUENT [a]

Extent of truancy	BOYS		Total
	Delinquent	Not delinquent	
No truancy	41	43	84
Occasional truancy	17	..	17
Serious truancy	109	1	110
Boy physically disqualified for school attendance	4	..	4
Total	171	44	215

[a] Information is not available as the truancy of 79 of the 294 boys included in the study.

TABLE 15.—STATUS OF 163 BOYS NOT GAINFULLY EMPLOYED [a]

Status	Boys
Less than 14 years of age	99
14 years of age or more:	
Attending school	31
In institutions	8
Out of work and out of school	25
Total	163

[a] Of the 294 boys, 100 were gainfully employed. Information is not available as to the status of 31 boys.

TABLE 16.—OCCUPATION AND WAGES OF 100 BOYS GAINFULLY EMPLOYED [a]

Occupation	BOYS EARNING						Boys whose earnings are not available	All boys
	$2 and less than $3	$3 and less than $4	$4 and less than $5	$5 and less than $6	$6 and less than $7	$7 and less than more		
Errand boy	3	2	3	5	2	1	6	22
Office boy	..	..	2	6	1	2	4	15
Piano factory worker	..	1	3	2	1	4	3	14
Driver or driver's helper	..	..	..	2	2	3	..	7
Stock boy	..	1	..	..	2	1	1	5
Printer's apprentice	..	..	..	..	1	2	1	4
Plumber's apprentice	..	..	..	1	1	..	2	4
Worker in factory other than piano factory	..	..	1	..	..	2	..	3
Cash boy	..	2	..	..	..	..	1	3
Tailor's helper	..	..	..	..	..	1	2	3
Farm hand	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	2
Check boy	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	2
Messenger boy	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	2
Bakery worker	..	..	1	1	..	..	..	2
Moving picture show worker	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Freight checker	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	1
Packer	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Garage helper	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Plasterer's helper	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Water boy, Metropolitan Railroad	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1
Engineer's helper	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1
Newspaper boy	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	1
Furnace company worker	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	1
Water works worker	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Clerk	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	1
Prisoner in navy prison	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	1
Total	3	9	12	21	11	19	24	99

[a] Of the 294 boys, 163 were not gainfully employed. Information is not available as to the status of 31 boys.

REPORT OF CHILDREN'S COURT, 1913

Excerpts from Annual Report Court of Special Sessions of the City of New York

For the Year Ending December 31, 1913

The following tables and charts are taken from the annual report of the children's court for the county of New York.

In the preparation of this report the court officials had the active co-operation of the Committee on Criminal Courts of the Charity Organization Society. With the approval of Frank Smith, the Chief Clerk of the Court of Special Sessions, and under the direction of Lawrence Veiller, Secretary of the Committee, the report was planned and compiled by George Everson, the Assistant Secretary of the Committee.

These statistics, based on a total of 9,019 cases and representing the juvenile delinquency of the entire county, make it possible for us to compare some of the features of juvenile lawlessness on the Middle West Side with corresponding conditions in the larger area. To quote from the report:

"The total number of arraignments in the Court for the year 1913 was 9,019. The statistical tables of this report are based on this large number of cases. Any facts concerning juvenile delinquency in these statistics should be of permanent scientific value because of the fact of the large number of cases involved.

"In the present report an effort has been made to put before the public more detailed information, in the form of statistical tables and charts, than has been done in previous years. These tables, and their illustrative graphics, will show to some extent the detail of the work of the Court and will make available for popular use some of the information which is carefully tabulated for each case that comes into the Court during the year.

"Many pertinent and interesting facts concerning juvenile

delinquency are available from the court records. Owing to the limited time at the disposal of the clerical staff for the compilation of statistics from the individual records of the Court, we have heretofore been unable to get as much of the information before the public as we should like to have done. The assistance which we have received from the Committee on Criminal Courts of the Charity Organization Society has made it possible for us to put the statistics in their present form, they having collaborated with our staff, at the expenditure of considerable time and money, for which we are considerably indebted.

"The installation of the probation system, with its very accurate and detailed records of each case investigated by, or placed in charge of probation officers, has put many more facts at our disposal in regard to the family conditions, school and employment records, etc., of children receiving probationary treatment. It has been our purpose to include some of these facts of general and scientific interest in this report.

"CHARTS AND GRAPHICS.—An effort has been made to illustrate the most pertinent facts brought out in the statistical tables by some simple charts and graphics; it is hoped that the reader will get at a glance the gist of the tables so illustrated. In some instances, the charts have been used to supplement the information included in the tables accompanying them.

"SPECIAL PROCEEDINGS AND JUVENILE DELINQUENCY DISTINGUISHED.—It will be noted that throughout the statistical tables distinction has been made between cases of children arraigned as juvenile delinquents and children arraigned in special proceedings. An explanation of these terms may help the reader. The general distinction, broadly stated, is the same distinction which is generally made between delinquent and dependent children. Special Proceedings, however, include beside improper guardianship cases, so-called, all cases of truancy, ungovernable and disorderly children, and cases of girls in danger of becoming morally depraved. While these latter are considered by the Court as being in need of the care and protection of the State, their offenses often show evidence of grave moral turpitude, and the Court finds them to be among the most difficult cases to handle.

"Whenever, in the case of a child brought before the Court on the charge of juvenile delinquency, it shall appear in the course of the trial that the child is without proper guardianship, or is in unfavorable environment, he or she may be

adjudged to be in need of the care and protection of the State, and is then arraigned in Special Proceedings.

"PROBATION.—Within the last two years great advances have been made in probation in this Court. A complete and well-organized system of probation records has been installed, and the Court has the service of twenty-three probation officers who devote their entire time and energy to the assistance and reformation of children placed in their charge by the Court. The results of their investigations are invaluable to the judge in making his disposition of the cases, and their work in helping the boys and girls to become good citizens is a great service to the community. The only fault which we have to find with the present system is the fact that the period of probation in general is not long enough to allow the probation officer to do his best work with the children under his charge. Table XXX, and its accompanying chart, shows the length of the probation periods; it will be noted that one-quarter of the cases are on probation for a period of two months or under, while 80 per cent of them are for periods of less than six months. It is the opinion of experts that proper probationary treatment can be given only when the child is placed under the officer for sufficient length of time to allow the officer to do really constructive work with the child, so that it will be of lasting influence in his life. If the offense is not sufficiently serious to require a substantial probation period, then it is not of sufficient importance to have the probation officer spend his time with the case. In order to have longer probation periods a larger corps of probation officers will be necessary.

"TRUANCY.—The report shows that there were 62 cases of violation of the compulsory education law brought into the Court during the year. Investigations of cases by the probation officers have disclosed the appalling prevalence of truancy among juvenile delinquents. Hundreds of cases are on record in the probation rooms showing that children on probation have been habitual truants previous to being brought into the Court on delinquency charges."

Under the group of cases defined as Special Proceedings is often found the neglected young girl of the accompanying study by Ruth S. True. The columns in the following tables dealing with girls' cases will throw some light on the charges on which she sometimes gets into court.

(TABLE XVIII.—Residence by Districts of Children

Districts and territory in districts	JUVENILE DELINQUENCY					
	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
I. Below 14th St., East of 4th Ave., Bowery and Catharine St.	1,002	21.0	23	25.2	1,025	21.1
II. Below 14th St., West of 4th Ave., Bowery and Catharine St.	604	12.7	9	9.9	613	12.6
III. East of 6th Ave., from 14th St. to 63d St.[a]	332	7.0	6	6.6	338	7.0
IV. West of 6th Ave., between 14th St. and 62d St.	499	10.5	10	11.0	509	10.5
V. East of 5th Ave., from 63d St. to 109th St.[b]	667	14.0	16	17.6	683	14.1
VI. West of Central Park and 8th Ave., from 62d St. to 126th St.	253	5.3	4	4.4	257	5.3
VII. In Manhattan, East of 8th Ave., North of 109th St.[c]	597	12.5	12	13.2	609	12.5
VIII. West of 8th Ave., between 126th St. and 155th St.	91	1.9	..	..	91	1.9
IX. West of 8th Ave. and Harlem River North of 155th St.	32	.7	..	..	32	.7
X. All of The Bronx	529	11.1	8	8.8	537	11.1
Brooklyn[d]	113	2.4	..	..	113	2.3
All others	29	.6	2	2.2	31	.6
Not stated	15	.3	1	1.1	16	.3
Total	4,763	100.0	91	100.0	4,854	100.0

[a] East of 6th Ave., from 14th St. to 63d St. to 3d Ave.; and 64th St., from 3d
[b] East of 5th Ave., from 63d St. to 3d Ave., and 64th St., between 3d Ave. and
[c] In Manhattan, East of 8th Ave., North of 110th St. to 5th Ave., and 112th St.,
[d] Children living in Brooklyn, but arrested in Manhattan.

* Counted by children.

ONE

Arraigned during 1913.* Report, pp. 72–73.)

SPECIAL PROCEEDINGS						ALL CASES					
Male		Female		Total		Male		Female		Total	
Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
473	17.8	235	15.5	708	17.0	1,475	19.9	258	16.0	1,733	19.2
278	10.4	123	8.1	401	9.6	882	11.9	132	8.2	1,014	11.3
192	7.2	152	10.0	344	8.3	524	7.1	158	9.8	682	7.6
330	12.4	235	15.5	565	13.6	829	11.2	245	15.4	1,074	11.9
306	11.6	186	12.3	492	11.8	973	13.1	202	12.6	1,175	13.0
98	3.7	70	4.7	168	4.0	351	4.7	74	4.6	425	4.7
257	9.7	161	10.6	418	10.0	854	11.5	173	10.8	1,027	11.4
46	1.8	20	1.3	66	1.6	137	1.9	20	1.2	157	1.8
22	.8	13	.9	35	.8	54	.7	13	.8	67	.7
308	11.7	191	12.6	499	12.0	837	11.3	199	12.4	1,036	11.5
36	1.3	13	.9	49	1.2	149	2.1	13	.8	162	1.8
145	5.5	37	2.4	182	4.4	174	2.3	39	2.4	213	2.3
159	6.1	79	5.2	238	5.7	174	2.3	80	5.0	254	2.8
2,650	100.0	1,515	100.0	4,165	100.0	7,413	100.0	1 606	100.0	9,019	100.0

Ave. to East River.
East River, to 112th St. to 3d Ave., and 109th St. from 3d Ave. to the East River. from 5th Ave. to 3d Ave., and 109th St., from 3d Ave. to East River.

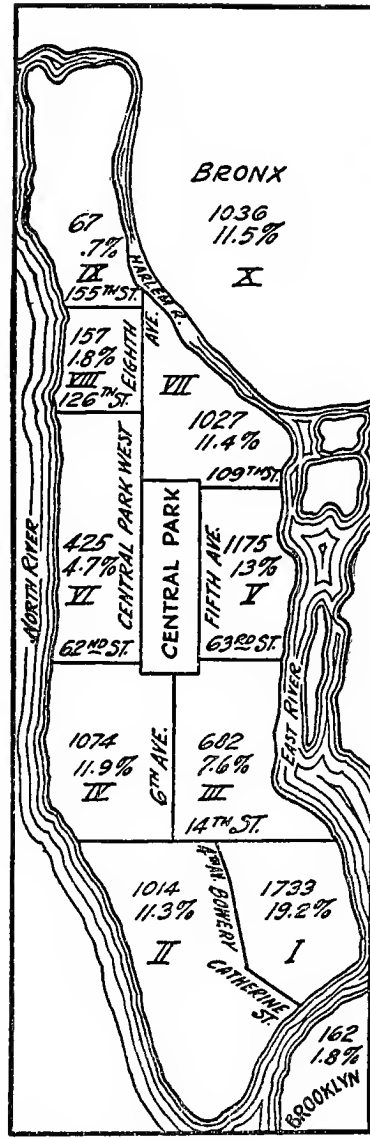


CHART I

(CHART XIV.—Residence by Districts of Children Arraigned During 1913. Report, p. 74.)

TABLE TWO

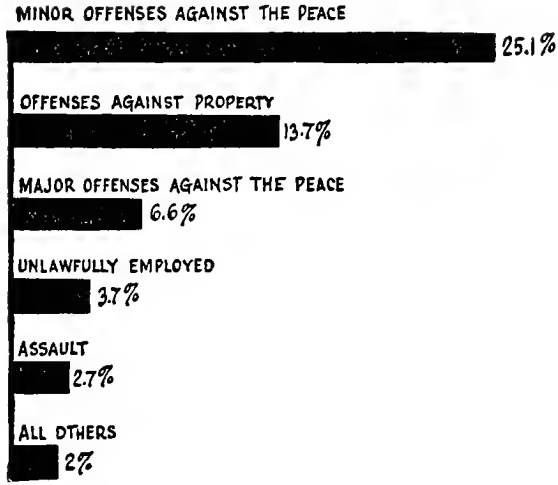
(TABLE IV.—Nature of Charges.* Report, p. 52.)

Charges	MALE		FEMALE		TOTAL	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
1. Juvenile delinquency:[a]						
a. Assault	236	5.0	10	11.0	246	5.1
b. Offenses against property	1,212	25.3	25	27.4	1,237	25.4
c. Major offenses against the peace	584	12.3	12	13.2	596	12.3
d. Minor offenses agaiost the peace	2,253	47.3	14	15.4	2,267	46.7
e. Unlawfully employed	312	6.6	18	19.8	330	6.8
f. Violation of corporation ordinances not included above	54	1.1	4	4.4	58	1.2
g. Unclassified	112	2.4	8	8.8	120	2.5
h. Total	4,763	100.0	91	100.0	4,854	100.0
2. Special proceedings:[b]						
a. Improper guardianship	2,199	82.9	1,271	83.9	3.470	83.3
b. Sex offenses	18	.7	135	8.9	153	3.7
c. Ungovernable and disorderly children	376	14.2	104	6.9	480	11.5
d. Truancy	57	2.2	5	.3	62	1.5
e. Total	2,650	100.0	1,515	100.0	4,165	100.0
3. Total, all cases:						
a. Juvenile delinquency	4,763	64.3	91	5.7	4,854	53.8
b. Special proceedings	2,650	35.7	1,515	94.3	4,165	46.2
c. Grand total	7,413	100.0	1,606	100.0	9,019	100.0

[a] *Juvenile Delinquency: Assault* includes third degree and felonious assault; *Offenses against property* includes burglary, robbery, grand and petit larceny, and unlawful entry; *Major offenses against the peace* includes disorderly conduct as defined by Section 43, Penal law; carrying dangerous weapons and discharging firearms; *Minor offenses against the peace* includes disorderly conduct as defined under Section 720 and violation of railroad law. *Unlawfully employed,* includes peddling and violation of the labor law.

[b] *Special Proceedings: Improper guardiansbip* includes destitute, neglected, and ill-treated children; *Sex offenses* includes cases under Section 353, laws of 1886, and cases of sex immorality defined in Section 486, Penal Law; *Ungovernable and disorderly children* includes children complained of by parents, children who desert home, and so forth.

* Counted by cases, and classified by terms in popular use, because statutory classifications which are clear to the lawyer are likely to confuse the layman.



SPECIAL PROCEEDINGS

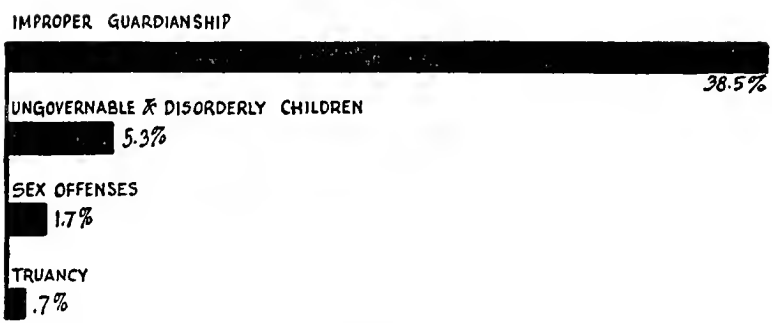


CHART II

(CHART II.—Nature of Charges. Report, p. 53.)
(Percentages shown are of the total number (9,019) of all cases arraigned.)

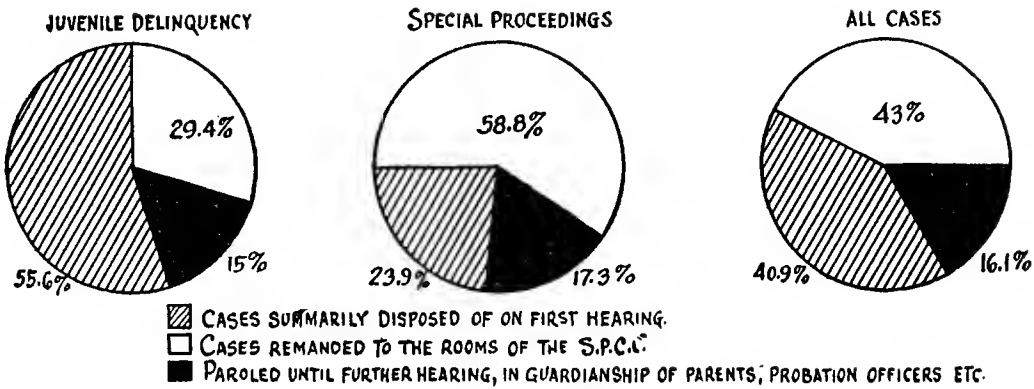


CHART III

(CHART V.—Disposition on First Hearing of all Cases Arraigned During the Year. Report, p. 57.)

TABLE

(TABLE IX.—Disposition on First Hearing of all

Disposition	JUVENILE DELINQUENCY					
	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
1. Summarily disposed of	2,668	56.0	29	31.9	2,697	55.6
2. Remanded[a]	1,389	29.2	40	44.0	1,429	29.4
3. Paroled[b]	706	14.8	22	24.1	728	15.0
4. Total	4,763	100.0	91	100 0	4,854	100.0

[a] *Remanded* means number of children detained temporarily at the rooms of the
[b] These numbers include cases placed on probation without remand.
* Counted by cases.

TABLE FOUR

(TABLE XII.—Disposition in Cases of Adjudged Juvenile Delinquents.* Report, p. 63.)

Disposition	TOTAL					
	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Sentence suspended	748	22.8	13	25.0	761	22.8
Placed on probation	1,449	44.2	31	59.6	1,480	44.4
Committed without probation	508	15.5	4	7.7	512	15.4
Fined	575	17.5	4	7.7	579	17.4
Total	3,280	100.0	52	100.0	3,332	100.0

* Counted by cases.

THREE

Cases Arraigned During the Year.* Report, p. 57.)

SPECIAL PROCEEDINGS						ALL CASES					
Male		Female		Total		Male		Female		Total	
Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
669	25.2	325	21.5	994	23.9	3,337	45.0	354	22.0	3,691	40.9
1,552	58.6	896	59.1	2,448	58.8	2,941	39.7	936	58.3	3,877	43.0
429	16.2	294	19.4	723	17.3	1,135	15.3	316	19.7	1,451	16.1
2,650	100.0	1,515	100.0	4,165	100.0	7,413	100.0	1,606	100.0	9,019	100.0

Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children while case is being investigated, etc.

TABLE FIVE

(TABLE XIII.—Disposition in all Cases of Special Proceedings where Complaint was Sustained. Report, p. 64.)

Disposition	TOTAL IN ALL CASES					
	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Committed to institutions . . .	793	38.8	539	41.8	1,332	39.9
Placed in charge of probation officers	1,253	61.2	751	58.2	2,004	60.1
Total	2,046	100.0	1,290	100.0	3,336	100.0

TABLE

(TABLE XVI.—Ages of all Children

Ages	JUVENILE DELINQUENCY					
	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
7 years and under	16	.4	..	....	16	.4
8 and 9 years	236	5.0	7	7.7	243	5.0
10 and 11 years	670	14.1	10	11.0	680	14.0
12 and 13 years	1,515	31.8	29	31.9	1,544	31.8
14 and 15 years	2,322	48.7	44	48.3	2,366	48.7
16 and over (Transferred to other courts)	4	.0	1	1.1	5	.1
Total	4,763	100.0	91	100.0	4,854	100.0

* Counted by cases.

SIX

Arraigned During the Year.* Report, p. 68.)

SPECIAL PROCEEDINGS						ALL CASES					
Male		Female		Total		Male		Female		Total	
Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
581	21.9	484	32.0	1,065	25.6	597	8.1	484	30.2	1,081	12.0
319	12.0	161	10.6	480	11.5	555	7.5	168	10.5	723	8.1
433	16.4	191	12.6	624	15.0	1,103	14.9	201	12.5	1,304	14.5
625	23.6	265	17.5	890	21.4	2,140	28.9	294	18.3	2,434	26.9
692	26.1	414	27.3	1,106	26.5	3,014	40.6	458	28.5	3,472	38.5
.....	....	.....	....	.....	....	4	.0	1	.0	5	.0
2,650	100.0	1,515	100.0	4,165	100.0	7,413	100.0	1,606	100.0	9,019	100.0

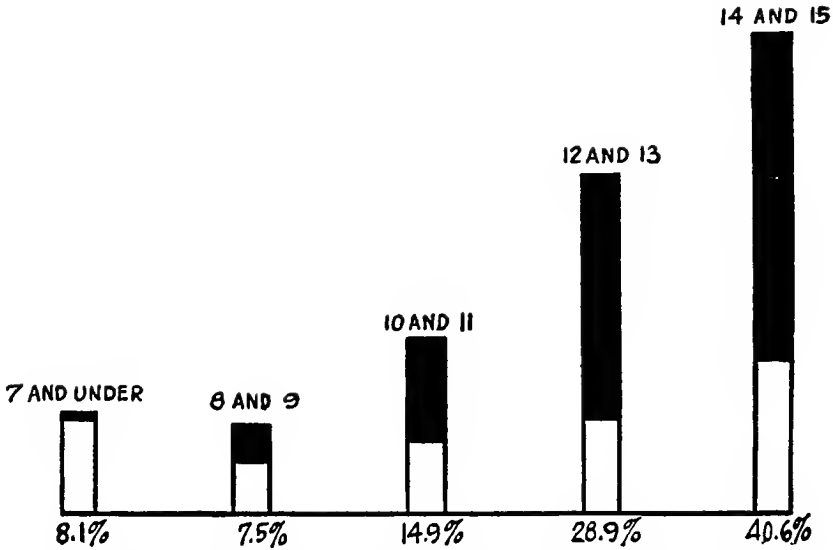


CHART IV

(CHART XI.—Showing Ages of Boys Arraigned During the Year. Report, p. 69.)
Total number of boys, 7,413.

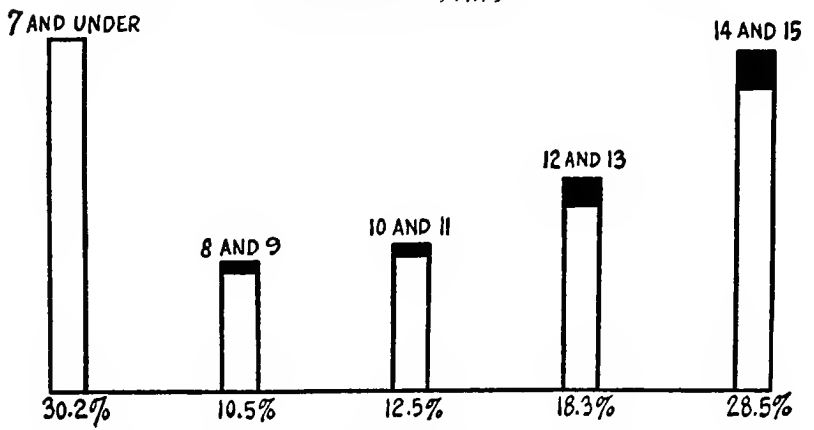


CHART V

(CHART XII.—Showing Ages of Girls Arraigned During the Year. Report, p. 69.)
Total number of girls, 1,606.

(*Black* indicates Juvenile Delinquency. *White* indicates Special Proceedings.)

TABLE SEVEN

(TABLE XIV.—Single and Group Delinquency.* Report, p. 65.)

	JUVENILE DELINQUENCY		SPECIAL PROCEEDINGS		TOTAL ALL CASES	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Number of cases where children were arraigned singly	2,169	44.7	1,937	46.5	4,106	45.5
Number of cases arraigned in groups of two	1,138	23.4	850	20.4	1,988	22.1
Number of cases arraigned in groups of three or more	1,547	31.9	1,378	33.1	2,925	32.4
Total	4,854	100.0	4,165	100.0	9,019	100.0

* Counted by cases.

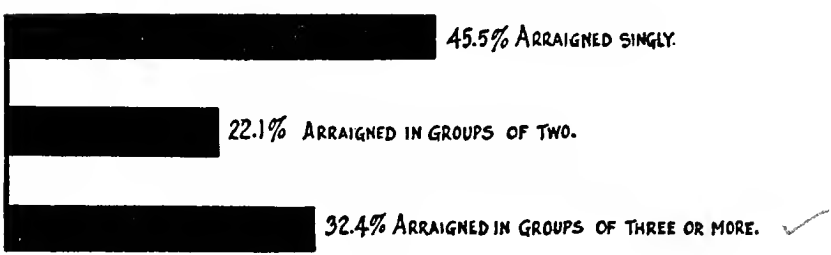


CHART VI

(CHART X.—Single and Group Delinquency. Report, p. 65.)

TABLE

(TABLE XX.—Parental Condition of

Parental condition	JUVENILE DELINQUENCY					
	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Father dead	270	16.0	6	14.6	276	15.8
Mother dead	131	7.8	2	4.9	133	7.7
Both parents dead	28	1.6	1	2.4	29	1.8
Parents separated	14	.8	..	....	14	.8
Deserted by father	44	2.6	2	4.9	46	2.6
Deserted by mother	7	.4	..	....	7	.4
Deserted by both parents	5	.3	..	....	5	.2
One or both parents in prison	2	.1	1	2.4	3	.1
One or both parents in other institutions	15	.9	..	....	15	.9
Mother not in America	6	.3	..	....	6	.3
Father not in America	3	.1	..	....	3	.1
Neither parent in America	.....	....	..	....	.....	....
None of above conditions existing	1,162	68.5	29	70.8	1,191	68.7
Parental condition not reported	10	.6	..	....	10	.6
Total	1,697	100.0	41	100.0	1,738	100.0

*Counted by children.

NOTE.—In several cases two conditions are reported in one case.

TABLE

(TABLE XV.—Previous

	JUVENILE DELINQUENCY					
	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Number arraigned first time	3,528	74.1	90	98.9	3,618	74.5
Number arraigned who had previous court record	1,235	25.9	1	1.1	1,236	25.5
Total	4,763	100.0	91	100.0	4,854	100.0

*Counted by cases.

NOTE.—The number of children before the court who had previous records was

EIGHT

all Children Investigated.* Report, p. 78.)

SPECIAL PROCEEDINGS						ALL CASES					
Male		Female		Total		Male		Female		Total	
Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
149	17.6	47	23.1	196	18.7	419	16.5	53	21.8	472	16.9
99	11.7	29	14.4	128	12.3	230	9.0	31	12.8	261	9.5
19	2.3	8	4.0	27	2.5	47	1.8	9	3.7	56	2.0
17	2.0	.....	....	17	1.6	31	1.2	.....	....	31	1.1
25	3.0	2	1.0	27	2.5	69	2.7	4	1.6	73	2.6
5	.6	3	1.5	8	.7	12	.5	3	1.2	15	.5
.....	....	4	1.9	4	.4	5	.2	4	1.6	9	.3
4	.5	.....	....	4	.4	6	.2	1	.4	7	.3
7	.8	1	.5	8	.7	22	.9	1	.4	23	.8
6	.7	.....	....	6	.6	12	.5	.....	....	12	.4
1	.1	.....	....	1	.1	4	.2	.....	....	4	.1
1	.1	.....	....	1	.1	1	.....	....	....	1	....
507	60.0	104	51.1	611	58.5	1,669	65.7	133	54.5	1,802	64.7
5	.6	5	2.5	10	.9	15	.6	5	2.0	20	.8
845	100.0	203	100.0	1,048	100.0	2,542	100.0	244	100.0	2,786	100.0

NINE

Records.* Report, p. 67.)

SPECIAL PROCEEDINGS						ALL CASES					
Male		Female		Total		Male		Female		Total	
Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
2,198	82.9	1,461	96.4	3,659	87.9	5,726	77.2	1,551	96.6	7,277	80.7
452	17.1	54	3.6	506	12.1	1,687	22.8	55	3.4	1,742	19.3
2,650	100.0	1,515	100.0	4,165	100.0	7,413	100.0	1,606	100.0	9,019	100.0

probably slightly in excess of the number shown by the figures.

TABLE

(TABLE XVII.—School and Employment

	JUVENILE DELINQUENCY					
	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Children in regular grades	1,124	66.9	26	63.4	1,150	66.8
Children in special classes	75	4.5	..	....	75	4.4
Children in ungraded classes	19	1.1	..	....	19	1.1
Children having working papers	339	20.2	6	14.6	345	20.0
Children not in school	98	5.8	9	22.0	107	6.2
Not reported	25	1.5	..	....	25	1.5
Total	1,680	100.0	41	100.0	1,721	100.0

* Counted by children.

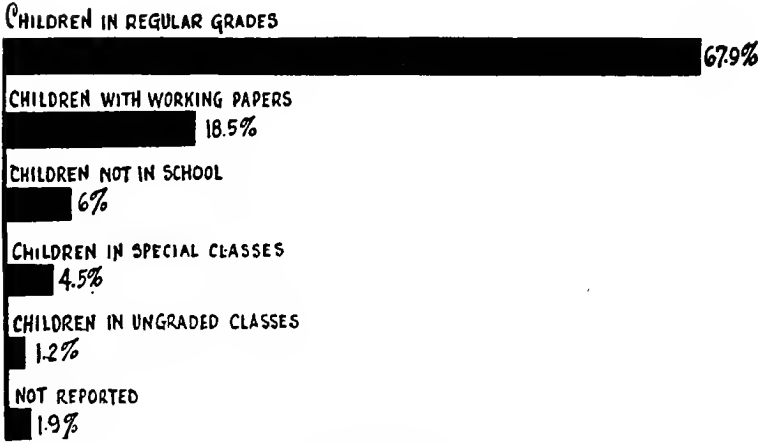


CHART VII

(CHART XIII.—School and Employment Record of Children Investigated. Report, p. 71.)

TEN

Record of Children Investigated.* Report, p. 70.)

SPECIAL PROCEEDINGS						ALL CASES					
Male		Female		Total		Male		Female		Total	
Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
613	73.4	110	55.0	723	69.8	1,737	69.0	136	56.4	1,873	67.9
41	4.9	7	3.5	48	4.6	116	4.6	7	2.9	123	4.5
11	1.3	2	1.0	13	1.3	30	1.2	2	.8	32	1.2
111	13.2	53	26.5	164	15.8	450	17.9	59	24.5	509	18.5
46	5.5	14	7.0	60	5.8	144	5.7	23	9.6	167	6.0
14	1.7	14	7.0	28	2.7	39	1.6	14	5.8	53	1.9
836	100.0	200	100.0	1,036	100.0	2,516	100.0	241	100.0	2,757	100.0

TABLE ELEVEN

(TABLE XXVII.—General Summary of Probation.* Report, p. 84.)

	JUVENILE DELINQUENCY			SPECIAL PROCEEDINGS			ALL CASES		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Number pending on probation, Jan. 1, 1913 .	391	40	431	...	...	...	391	40	431
Number placed on probation during year . . .	1,386	36	1,422	720	184	904	2,106	220	2,326
Number whose probation terminated during year	1,278	55	1,333	501	117	618	1,779	172	1,951
Number pending Dec. 31, 1913	499	21	520	219	67	286	718	88	806

* Counted by cases.

TABLE

(TABLE XXVIII.—Age of Children Placed on

Age	JUVENILE DELINQUENCY					
	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
7 Years and under	4	.3	..	....	4	.3
8 and 9 years	83	5.9	3	8.3	86	6.0
10 and 11 years	206	14.9	5	13.9	211	14.8
12 and 13 years	486	35.2	12	33.3	498	35.0
14 and 15 years	584	42.1	16	44.5	600	42.2
16 years and over	10	.7	..	....	10	.8
Not stated	13	.9	..	....	13	.9
Total	1,386	100.0	36	100.0	1,422	100.0

* Counted by cases.

TABLE

(TABLE XXX.—Duration of Probation,

Length of probation	JUVENILE DELINQUENCY					
	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
2 months and under	312	25.4	8	33.3	320	25.5
3 months	220	18.0	5	21.0	225	18.0
4 months	288	23.4	8	33.3	296	23.6
5 months	190	15.4	2	8.3	192	15.3
6 months	97	7.9	1	4.1	98	7.8
7 months	43	3.5	..	....	43	3.4
8 months	34	2.8	..	....	34	2.7
9 months	19	1.5	..	....	19	1.5
10 months	14	1.1	..	....	14	1.1
11 months	5	.4	..	....	5	.4
12 months and over	8	.6	..	....	8	.7
Total	1,230	100.0	24	100.0	1,254	100.0

TWELVE

Probation During 1913.* Report, p. 85.)

SPECIAL PROCEEDINGS						ALL CASES					
Male		Female		Total		Male		Female		Total	
Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
9	1.2	2	1.1	11	1.2	13	.6	2	.9	15	.6
58	8.1	6	3.3	64	7.1	141	6.7	9	4.1	150	6.4
142	19.7	9	4.8	151	16.7	348	16.5	14	6.4	362	15.6
234	32.5	39	21.2	273	30.1	720	34.2	51	23.1	771	33.2
269	37.3	126	68.5	395	43.8	853	40.6	142	64.6	995	42.7
1	.2	2	1.1	3	.3	11	.5	2	.9	13	.6
7	1.0	.....	....	7	.8	20	.9	.....	....	20	.9
720	100.0	184	100.0	904	100.0	2,106	100.0	220	100.0	2,326	100.0

THIRTEEN

Cases Ended During 1913. Report, p. 88.)

SPECIAL PROCEEDINGS						ALL CASES					
Male		Female		Total		Male		Female		Total	
Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
169	26.2	38	25.3	207	26.0	481	25.7	46	26.4	527	25.7
138	21.4	28	18.6	166	20.9	358	19.1	33	19.0	391	19.1
137	21.2	26	17.3	163	20.5	425	22.7	34	19.4	459	22.4
64	9.8	10	6.7	74	9.3	254	13.5	12	6.9	266	13.0
59	9.2	16	10.7	75	9.4	156	8.3	17	9.6	173	8.5
31	4.8	11	7.4	42	5.3	74	3.9	11	6.4	85	4.1
15	2.4	5	3.3	20	2.5	49	2.6	5	2.9	54	2.6
10	1.6	5	3.3	15	1.9	29	1.5	5	2.9	34	1.7
6	.9	3	2.0	9	1.2	20	1.1	3	1.8	23	1.1
6	.9	6	4.0	12	1.5	11	.6	6	3.5	17	.8
10	1.6	2	1.4	12	1.5	18	1.0	2	1.2	20	1.0
645	100.0	150	100.0	795	100.0	1,875	100.0	174	100.0	2,049	100.0

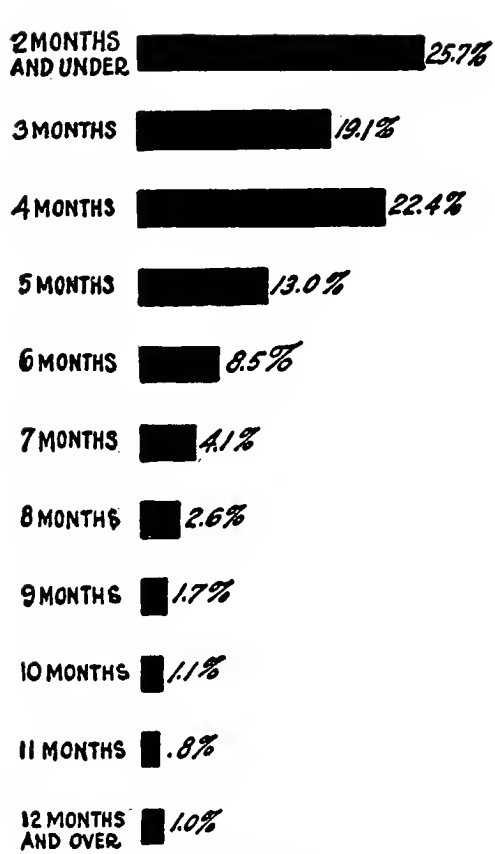


CHART VIII

(CHART XVII.—Duration of Probation. Report, p. 89.)

TABLE FOURTEEN

(TABLE XXXI.—Volume of Business Before Court During 1913. Report, p. 89.)

Month	NEW CASES		CASES REARRAIGNED		TOTAL CASES	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
January	1,060	11.8	1,337	9.8	2,397	10.6
February	635	7.0	595	4.4	1,230	5.4
March	766	8.5	1,013	7.4	1,779	7.8
April	834	9.3	1,141	8.4	1,975	8.7
May	882	9.8	1,410	10.3	2,292	10.2
June	786	8.7	1,142	8.4	1,928	8.5
July	615	6.8	1,039	7.6	1,654	7.3
August	644	7.1	1,115	8.2	1,759	7.8
September	728	8.1	990	7.3	1,718	7.6
October	786	8.7	1,349	9.9	2,135	9.4
November	694	7.7	1,166	8.5	1,860	8.2
December	589	6.5	1,335	9.8	1,924	8.5
Total	9,019	100.0	13,632	100.0	22,651	100.0
Average number of cases per day	.....	.....	.....	.....	75	.....

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RUSSELL SAGE
FOUNDATION

—

THE NEGLECTED GIRL

BY

RUTH S. TRUE

WEST SIDE STUDIES

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

THE material for the following studies was collected by four persons. The final chapter, which deals with the Italian girl of the West Side, was prepared by one of the group working independently. This course was necessary, as the Italian girl's life is inseparable from that of her family and the only approach to her is by way of her own home. One could not know the Italian girl of the West Side without knowing also her father, her mother, and her numerous brothers and sisters, if not, indeed, a great many of her relatives. The other three workers, including the writer, joined in the management of a small house which was used as a recreation center and club house. They also collaborated in keeping a daily journal, to which reference is made in the following pages.

It was our wish especially to gain some knowledge of the type of girl who is seen so frequently at the street corners and who refuses to be attracted to agencies which frankly declare a desire to improve her. The club, therefore, adopted an open-door policy and the leaders tried to refrain from obvious attempts to influence or control the girls who came. The aim was to encourage sincerity among them, and to prevent their "playing up" to superimposed standards "for what there was in it." Not that we thought that these

girls were especially inclined to practice fraud; but we knew from experience that work with too obvious a purpose "to do good" often encourages hypocrisy.

One of our reasons for opening the Tenth Avenue club for girls was that we had found it impossible to be on an intimate footing with them in their homes. The atmosphere of family life was far too often one of mutual reproach and recrimination, and the visitor was likely to find herself in the embarrassing position of a court of appeals. Picture an evening spent in the company of the two Katie Murphys, mother and daughter, thus: Mrs. Murphy, sitting with folded arms in the rocking-chair, rehearses the story of Katie's sins. Katie leans against the back of the sofa with dropped eyelids and a face as expressionless as putty. All the efforts of the involuntary court of appeals to induce the girl to say a word in her own behalf are met by stony silence. Meanwhile, the mother runs on, zealously driving nails in her own coffin as far as the girl's affection and confidence are concerned. Harassed by the problem of feeding, clothing, and housing six children on $8.00 a week, Mrs. Murphy has little strength or imagination left for the subtler problem of how to handle an adolescent daughter.

It was such experiences that taught us the necessity of providing some neutral ground on which to meet Katie Murphy, if we were to secure her confidence. This neutral ground took the form of club rooms where we established ourselves with the definite intention of giving Katie the just due of her youth,—a good time.

We continued, however, to visit the families of girls in the course of the investigation, collecting thereby

material for the observations on home life contained in the following chapters. The girls themselves welcomed our visits even though they must have realized in a vague way that we were keeping "tab" on conditions in the homes from which our club members came. One day May Sipp,* a new girl, came to one of the club leaders and said, "Miss ——, will you come to my house tomorrow?" The leader thought that perhaps a party was being planned and asked for further details. "Why, no one has been to my house yet and I'd like to have you come," the girl explained. It was evident that she felt a little put out because her home had not as yet been visited.

It was the middle of December when we first opened for the girls in the neighborhood the house which we had taken for the purpose. The place received no more colorful name than the number on the door, "471," by which it was designated during the whole time we occupied it. "471" was a red brick structure consisting of three stories and a basement. It was rather a friendly looking house with a "stoop" and the remnants of front and back yards; that is, there was a small area in front guarded by a low iron fence with a gate, and a square box in the rear which became a "playground" in summer. A supervisor from Christ Presbyterian Church was placed in charge of the latter, and the children crowded into the little box in such numbers that we soon had complaints from the neighbors against the shrill chorus rising from the back yard.

The front yard was of no particular use except that the iron gate served to stimulate the imagination of the

* The names of girls given in this book are fictitious.

small boys who haunted our premises. It was a continual bone of contention. It was always being carried away by bands of enemies and heroically restored by bands of friends—who were sometimes one and the same—until at last we decided to remove it entirely from the sidewalk, where it was of no earthly use as a gate, and store it in an inner closet.

We occupied two floors of the house, the ground floor and the basement. In the basement was a large, well lighted kitchen and a living room. On the first floor were two large connecting rooms which were furnished with folding chairs and a piano. Though our equipment was meager, we had a cook stove and a piano. These two pieces of furniture we came to regard as the necessary minimum of equipment for a girls' club under all circumstances.

The occupations of the clubs—cooking, sewing, basket-weaving, brass work—were carried on as pastime rather than as work. It was necessary to vary the program repeatedly, for the shifting attention of the girls refused to consider any occupation as pleasurable for long at a time. The one thing of which they never seemed to tire was dancing, and in spite of the ugly forms which this recreation took, it had always the beauty of spontaneity. Their fondness for popular songs was almost as spontaneous. "The Garden of Love," "The Hypnotizing Man," "When Broadway was a Pasture," "The Girl that Married Dad," and others of the same lurid and sentimental strain were sung over and over to an unvarying appreciation.

Our relations with our co-tenants at "471" threw much additional light on conditions of life on the West Side. Above us on the second floor lived the McClusky

family. Ellen McClusky was fourteen, and since her mother's death two years before had been housekeeper for her father and three brothers. Lately one of the brothers had sickened of tuberculosis, thus adding to Ellen's housekeeping duties those of a sick nurse. Her school attendance had suffered. The truant officer was paying visits to the house and the health officer was also knocking at the door. Thus the clouds had already begun to gather on the McClusky horizon even before our entrance on the scene. Ellen's joy at the news that a club for girls had moved in on the ground floor of the house was unbounded. She was allowed at first to come down to us every evening.

But Mr. McClusky soon turned against us. He was a choleric individual, and was, moreover, constantly agitated over the condition of his son, who was dying by inches. It is not surprising that he turned violently against the social coercion which demanded that Ellen should go to school and his son be put away in a hospital. He mishandled the truant officer and forbade Ellen to have anything to do with the "teachers," whom he regarded as being in league with the forces that harassed him.

Ellen would hang over the banisters in the evenings watching the hall below. But her father had forbidden her even to speak to us. In March the invalid brother died, and the club rooms were closed for a week during which the house was given over to the solemn splendors of a funeral. After the undertaker had retired, the health officer took possession and the rooms were submitted to a thorough fumigation.

We opened our club once more, but Ellen was still forbidden to come to us. She continued living in the

isolation of the second floor, peeping over the banisters in the evening. It was finally a great relief to our overstrained sympathies when an officer of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, upon evidence furnished by Ellen's aunt, arrived and removed her from her home. This ended the vicissitudes of the McClusky family so far as we had any share in them.

On the top floor lived Mr. Distel, a German mechanic about fifty years old. He was an odd little bitten-off man, unkempt and kindly, who had lived alone in his three little rooms many years. He liked to hear the boys and girls downstairs, he said, and occasionally he made clumsy efforts to join in, but he had been too long a hermit. He could not. Needless to say, Mr. Distel was our most sympathetic neighbor, and the presence of the little man finishing off an industrious and worthy life in his lonely top floor rooms made us but the more determined in our task of supplying wholesome good times to our friends.

The source from which most of our difficulties proceeded was the spirit of disorder abroad in the neighborhood. This was indeed a lawless spirit and, in its extreme form, a sinister and menacing influence. The "Gopher gang"* figured largely in the neighborhood gossip, and whatever may have been the actual extent of Gopher operations in our vicinity, the current stories about them, however inaccurate as to facts, were in themselves a sufficiently evil influence in the lives of the boys and girls of the district.

Our most direct contact with local disorderly influences was through the gangs of small boys who

* This name is commonly applied to all the loafers and thugs from Thirtieth to Sixtieth Street.

haunted our premises, demanding to be admitted. As we were not prepared to open the house to them, our apparent inhospitality drew upon us a series of attacks. Not that all the attacks were acts of deliberate revenge; they were sometimes merely outbursts of habitual rowdyism. Nevertheless, they were a serious element in our situation. We found that we could not run a club for girls on Tenth Avenue without getting the small boys' consent. Time had to be spent in conciliating them. At first our method was to station an outpost on the sidewalk. To one of the "teachers," who proved an adept in gang psychology, this difficult task was usually delegated. An entry in her diary under the date of December 20—a date on which the usual Tenth Avenue spirit was enhanced by the approach of the Christmas holidays—reads as follows: "As it was not my night on duty I had no intention of spending the evening at the Tenth Avenue house. I stopped in to speak to Miss Barclay and see how things were going, but the disorder on the outside was so bad that I was forced to spend most of the evening on the sidewalk outside with the boys."

An adventure which befell us on the second evening after our "opening" might have had very serious results. One of the club leaders was engaged in the front basement room with a group of the older girls. Early in the evening a gang of small boys gathered at the window outside to upbraid their sisters for not letting them come into the club. But they withdrew at a word from the "teacher," who might have suspected such unusual docility, but did not. An hour later when the girls were engaged in their club occupations, there came crashing through the window a weapon seven feet

in length, which proved to be a gun with a bayonet attachment. It struck the chair in which the teacher was sitting with such force as to chip the oaken back. As the gun was slowly drawn into the room there was much wringing of hands and a general desire to get a "cop." The gang had promptly made off, of course, leaving the sidewalk deserted.

It became apparent that the small boy could do serious damage unless conciliated. Treating with him in the darkness of the sidewalk proved not to be successful. It was evident that we must bring him inside and examine him in the light. One evening just after the front shutters had been pried open by depredators who had then promptly run away, one of the club leaders went out to the sidewalk, closing the door behind her. Nobody was in sight. But she had only to continue long enough in a motionless attitude to coax these young animals from their holes. Presently a head came out from behind a stoop, and another from an area opposite. Soon several boys were edging along the pavement toward the solitary figure in the dark, and in a few minutes the whole gang had closed in a circle around the trapper. She led them up the stoop, into the brightly lighted sitting room, and called for a clear statement of grievances. It was all ready. "Say, ain't no boys gona be let in never?"

The end of this council and of others which followed was that we gave Saturday night to the boys. Gradually, by this concession and others, we were able to conciliate the gangs. The worst of our troubles were over when they had been somewhat enlisted on our side, but there were occasions when the alliance proved embarrassing. For instance, one of the "teachers"

leaving the club late in the evening encountered a group of the older boys who gallantly offered to escort her to the car. As they neared the corner she remarked hastily that she must catch a car which had just stopped there. Before she could get her breath, four of the boys rushed ahead, jumped on the front platform, and began putting on the brakes so that the motorman could not start his car. The astonished club leader found herself seized by the other three youths and hoisted upon the rear platform with a parting shove which sent her hurtling into the car. The hooting and confusion were intense, and the passengers stood up in alarm. The boys, however, stood genially waving their caps as the car started. When the conductor came to collect the fare, he said suspiciously to the new passenger, "Did you know them boys?" The young woman was compelled to say that they were friends of hers, to which he replied, "Gee, but you got tough nuts for your friends!"

Stories of the disorder in the neighborhood came into the house in many ways. For instance, it was vividly reproduced in the conversation of the "gentleman friends" of the girls, who were often our guests. This was full of wild Gopher gossip and stories of arrests. There was one evening in particular when Doran thrilled us all with a long story of how he had gone home early one night and was sitting reading his paper, feeling rather queer—the trouble was in the air—when a terrific noise broke out in the hall. A whole gang of fellows had come into the house through the door on the roof and gone plunging down the stairs pursued by a trail of officers.

At this point in the story, Cleaver suggested that

Doran must have kept the door shut pretty tight, to which he agreed. Cleaver then accused him of being afraid, and recalled an instance when, as he claimed, Doran had shut the door against him when the "cops" were after him. Doran hotly denied this. The two ruffled spirits had to be smoothed and then the talk ran on, all about arrests and flights and pursuits. The whole conversation indicated how precariously near the edge of trouble these young men felt themselves to be all the time. It showed also the kind of lawlessness and rowdyism on which they built their youthful ideals, which lead in turn to further acts of lawlessness and rowdyism.

Echoes of the Gophers occurred in the talk of the girls. At one of the first club meetings, a tall, attractive girl arose and proposed as a name for the club, the "Gopherettes." As a motto, she suggested, "Hit one, hit all." This was Fanny Mayhew, who turned out on nearer acquaintance to be a wonderfully cheerful girl with a happy disposition and very popular with her family and school teachers. Though perfectly able to hold her own, she proved not so belligerent as the episode had suggested. She told a club leader that she had once belonged to a club of girls called the "Gopherettes." They had paid dues and even rented a basement room for a short time. Later the club had moved to the dock, and she had not been allowed by her mother to go to its meetings.

It was unavoidable that the girls' conduct should reflect the character of their environment. However, only once was there an outbreak against a club leader. Among the friends of the house who kindly volunteered from time to time to help with an evening's entertain-

ment was a young woman from another city who had, thanks to her own efforts and the interest of a wealthy friend, raised herself from the ranks of the girls who composed our clubs. On the occasion of this young woman's visit with us, there arose from the room where she was engaged with a group of girls the sounds of a violent quarrel. One of the regular leaders hastened to the room, arriving just in time to prevent blows. Julia O'Brien had lifted her arm to strike the young woman who had come up from the ranks and who was, moreover, for the moment the center of a hostile, excited group.

The leader of the riot, led downstairs to the kitchen, became instantly repentant, and the story of the quarrel came out. One of the girls had stepped on Julia's foot and she had exclaimed, "Oh, hell!" It was an unfortunate slip. Julia knew that swearing was not allowed in the club rooms and she was making strenuous efforts, as the leaders knew, to break a lifelong habit. But the young woman from the ranks did not know this and she had rebuked the guilty Julia in a tone of such cold and stinging contempt that it had not only provoked her victim to the point of striking blows but had drawn upon the tactless leader the wrath of every girl present.

A subsequent talk with this young woman revealed the attitude of offensive superiority which the girls had so hotly resented—an unfortunate by-product of her rapid rise into responsibility. A thoroughly self-respecting and deserving person, she had the peculiarly hard and unsympathetic attitude toward those who had failed to surmount their disabilities so often held by persons who have themselves struggled up from the ranks.

"Fights" among the girls were not infrequent. One unusually peaceful and happy evening, for instance, ended in open warfare because Barbara Egan, apparently with no evil intent, had asked Louisa Storm why her fingers were so crooked. No less painful was the quarrel between Mamie Taggart and Anna Strumpf, which was recorded in the following entry in the diary: "Tonight it was raining heavily but about eight or ten girls of the Wednesday night club turned up. Anna Strumpf sent word that she is not coming any more as she is afraid that Mamie Taggart will do her up outside."

Not all the "fights" were duels; some of them were petty wars of faction with faction. There was one particularly unfortunate evening when fatal "remarks were passed" and the deadly insult "tough" was used. The waves of bitterness were long in subsiding. The next evening a group of the girls, headed by Maggie Tracy and Clara Denley, appeared at the club wearing large stiff hair bows, some red and some black, which stuck out defiantly on either side. They announced that they had been called tough, so what could one expect? The club leaders began to muster their diplomacy and act as peacemakers, but the air was still belligerent when the opposite faction came in.

Expecting a repetition of the clash between the two sets, we were greatly surprised to see Sadie Fleming, the leader of the newcomers, go up to Maggie Tracy and put her hand affectionately on her enemy's shoulder, apparently forgetting that a state of war existed between them. Sadie and her companions had collected on their way to the club the most thrilling gossip of the entire year. Father Langan, according to the

story, on his way to give holy communion to a woman who was sick, had been attacked by a gang of Gophers. He had thrown open his coat to show the vestment of the priest, but they had robbed him of some money he was carrying and had left him stretched on the sidewalk!

This story was a nine-days' wonder on the West Side, where, as a usual thing, deeds of violence are promptly forgotten. Father Langan flatly contradicted the report, but this had no effect upon the currency of so picturesque a story. Very likely there were other quarrels besides Sadie's and Maggie's which were forgotten and effaced in the mutual thrill over this piece of modernized Irish folklore. Mrs. O'Callahan was graphic, bringing together details heard from various other sources as well.

"The father was just afther going t' give a dyin' woman th' Holy Communion. He was stheppin' down the street when these fellows set in upon him. 'B'ys,' he sez, throwin' back his coat and takin' an' showin' thim th' Sacrament which he had in his pocket, 'd'ye see what I'm carryin' here? For yer own good,' he sez, 'Oi warn ye,' he sez, 'not t' lay hand on a priest,' he sez, 'an' him goin' t' a sick old woman,' he sez. An' with that they hit him an' took what money he had—twenty-six dollars he was carryin', so they say. Oi can't understand why the fire from above didn't sthrike thim down dead. In Ireland, a priest there has only t' stamp with his foot and they'd ha' been sthruck down where they stood. But America is a bad place, it ain't like th' owld counthrey."

When the youthful gang spirit of Tenth Avenue had been conquered it seemed as though the last difficulty

had been surmounted. At the end of ten months we thought we had taken the measure of all the unpropitious influences that threatened our enterprise. But not so. We were yet to capitulate to the last and most powerful enemy of all—industry. First came a "dispossess" notice, and before we could get our breath from the surprise the house-wrecking crew were upon us. It was a simple matter to raze "471" and the adjoining buildings. In a few days they had all disappeared, along with the tiny back yard, where the children had played on hot summer days. On the site was erected a lofty factory building. Tomorrow the machines will be chugging away in the new shops, tended perhaps by some of the same girls who yesterday came knocking at the door of "471" asking for room to play. A neighboring school received the remnants of our clubs. With new conditions, a new environment, and new groups of girls, an entirely new start had to be made.

The observations given in this study of girl life on the West Side do not pretend to be extensive. No attempt was made to gather in numbers. We had 65 girls in our clubs whose home conditions were very well known.* But the study was written with much additional information in mind. Other girls came to the house and we were in touch in one way or another with a great many families of the neighborhood besides those of club members. The chief purpose, however, was to know intimately and sympathetically a small group of girls who were typical in many ways of the girls in any poor and neglected city population. As one

* See Chapter II, p. 19, and Appendix A, p. 121.

writer puts it: "The alternative lies, not between knowing a few people and knowing all to an equal degree, but between scratching the surface of the whole field and digging a portion of it spade deep in order to gain some idea of the under-soil throughout." *

How far did our groups represent the girl life of the West Side? It was a comparatively small number whom we knew, and the majority of them came from the "under-soil." The well cared for did not come to us. Our girls were for the most part the daughters of the poorest poor. As a group they differed essentially from the types of girls usually found in settlement clubs and classes. Some of them were not of the best local repute. They were known as "tough," and had been practically outlawed by certain settlements and recreation centers for the sake of the more promising element.

The settlement workers in the district repeatedly assured us that it was hard to hold the girls who came from our particular area and impossible to work with them in numbers. This testimony as to the unsocial character of these girls was sadly borne out by our experience in trying to organize them into clubs. There were many who corresponded to the description given by Dr. Katherine Bement Davis,† superintendent of Bedford Reformatory: "Our girls as a class are anti-social. It is very hard for them to see their conduct in its relation to the lives of those around them. They are individualistic in the extreme. They have never thought of the necessity for govern-

* Reynolds, Stephen, and Wooley, Bob and Tom: Seems So, A Workingman's View of Politics, p. xv. London, Macmillan, 1912.

† Now commissioner of corrections, New York City.

ment and law, and can see no reason for obedience to anything but their own impulse." *

But after making all due allowances for the limited number of girls studied and the "tough" reputations of some of them, the fact remains that these 65 girls and their friends were representative of many others who are subjected to the same environment. They had been brought up from babyhood in these blocks. Born in the crowded, dark tenement house they had had for a nursery the crowded sidewalk, and for a playground, the street. They had gone to the nearest school and from there to work in the nearest factory. They had seen the West Side, breathed the West Side, fed on the West Side for fourteen years or more, and had built up their adolescent ideals of the same forlorn material. That they had succumbed to unwholesome influences does not prove them to have been peculiarly weak or susceptible. Nor does it prove that their parents had been culpably delinquent in their duties. Conditions of living in the crowded city have tended to loosen the family bond, and the powerful force of neighborhood influence cannot be adequately combated by parental authority alone. The community must assume the responsibility for the environment of its least protected members.

A campaign for the control of conditions in the public dance halls has been begun. We are told that our young working girls must be given decent dance halls and not publicly and deliberately consigned to the degraded centers which attract them under that name.

* Annual Report of the New York State Reformatory for Women at Bedford, 1907, p. 25.

The West Side girls need much more, however, than protected dance halls. Some of the girls of this district are too poor to go to public dances. But the same dangers which threaten the dance-hall girl stalk unrestrained through the neglected streets and tenements of the West Side, and the girl of fourteen may fall a victim even under her own roof tree.

Demoralizing neighborhood conditions, such as congestion, filth, street temptations, and neighborhood gangs, all of which are practically synonymous with West Side life, influence the girls for evil only to a less degree than they influence the boys. One needs only to talk with any good mother of the district and hear how steadily she is engaged in fending her children against the life of the street to learn how constant and how potent are its influences. Testimony is borne to their power by the iterated complaint of West Side mothers,—of those who do not work away from home as well as of those who do,—that "Mamie is beginning to get out from under me," or, "Katie was the best girl you ever saw until we came to live on this block."

The problem of waywardness among West Side girls cannot be solved by long distance methods. Their environment must be made safe and their pleasures recognized and made decent. Some of the things which enlightened criminologists recommend for women in reformatories, after they have completely succumbed to the sort of conditions which abound on the West Side, are regular school attendance with manual training and flexible courses of study; regular hours for sleep, for food, for work, and for play; plenty of nourishing food; fresh air and outdoor life; the social discipline of com-

munity life. These are the things which are given to the girls in the reformatory at Bedford as a cure. The same things would help to prevent; they would preserve the West Side girl to society as a daughter and as a mother, as a worker and as a citizen.

CHAPTER II

IN THE GRIP OF POVERTY *

"YOU'VE got t' keep your eye on a girl. Now it's different with a boy. He can take care of himself. But you never can tell, if you don't keep a watch, when a girl's goin' to come back an' bring disgrace on you."

Such, in a nutshell, is the attitude of our community toward the adolescent girl. The chances are that she will "never give you worry an' trouble like a boy." But if she does, she will give vastly more. The sting of her shame is felt to be keener than any the boy can inflict. And with very few girls in our neighborhood is "trouble" of this sort beyond the range of the possible. Therefore the sense of family responsibility is far more alert in her behalf than on her brother's account. With few exceptions, the girl is assured of interest and counsel in her home. This counsel is not always wise. Worse still, it is not always tempered with the affection she needs. Here all family life struggles against handicaps. But through all the sorry failures, the ignorance, and the thwarted ambitions, much love and much concern for the girl are to be found in the homes of her people. Almost as a baby

* For more detailed data with regard to conditions in the 55 families to which the 65 girls dealt with in this study belonged, see Appendix A, Economic Condition of the Families, p. 121.

she has duties at home. The boy, as a rule, assumes them with his first pay envelope. Or, if he is earlier drafted into service, his chores are outside, probably the gathering of coal or wood while his sister stays at home to mind the babies. He has more freedom. She grows up in a more intimate relation to the family, far more under the eye of her mother. Therefore, family influence, nine times out of ten, is the great factor in her development. To understand her, home conditions must be known.

The most common of family skeletons among this West Side group is one which can scarcely be locked in its closet. It stalks forth, apparent to the casual glance. It is the grim elemental question of primitive needs. The daily struggle for food, shelter, and clothing is a stark reality to which only the youngest babies in the family can be oblivious. The daughter of fourteen knows it to the last sordid detail. In the group of families we knew, poverty was almost universal. Of our 65 girls only eight came from households which had known continuous comfort during these children's lives. All the others had at some time faced staggering misfortune. Forty of the total 55 families, or 73 per cent, had had records with relief societies, some stretching far back into the past.* Forty-three families, from which came 53 of the girls, must be classed with the very poor.†

Those of us born into better fortune seldom feel the meaning of this primitive struggle. We have no common denominator with it. We cannot estimate the heroism of "the poor." We have heard and read much

* See Appendix A, p. 121.

† Ibid., p. 121.

of hunger and exposure. These things play a large part in juvenile literature, whether sensational or classic. There is no little daughter of a comfortable home but is told the sad legend of the match girl who froze in the snow under the lighted windows from which floated sounds of merriment and music. The same little daughter, grown older, goes to school and learns that "man's three primal necessities are food, shelter, and clothing." But neither the faraway and sentimental pathos of the match girl's fate nor the cold scholastic statement of the text book is sufficient to teach one the real meaning of poverty. Only those who follow its trail, step by step, seeing the gradual and tragic disintegration of human worth under its influence, the suffering and waste left in its path, can realize its full power and significance.

To these girls who come forth to their recreation in a skirt worn thin and a gaping, ill-made waist, poverty is neither distant nor sentimentally touching. Possibly no child does starve in these streets. But there are many children who do not need to learn out of books about hunger. At any moment, one may open a door and find it, in all its gaunt, staring reality. We once found a tiny crippled baby who had sat for days in a fireless, barren room, stiffened with cold. She was as helpless and defenseless a little creature as could well be met. But this was the treatment that an indifferent community tolerated for her. And she was only one.

To our girls these were harsh facts of everyday knowledge. Familiarity with poverty makes it seem both more and less terrible. It does not kill, perhaps, but it stunts. It does not come as an overwhelming catastrophe; but steadily it saps the vigor of the young as

well as of the old. With the more fortunate of families such as these, extreme poverty is only episodic. A fairly decent standard is kept until something goes amiss. But one break in the machinery of their working capacity means hardship. No reserve fund has been possible, or the small amount saved is hopelessly inadequate to meet illness or protracted unemployment. It melts away in a few weeks or months. The family is very soon over the borderline of self-support. With the less fortunate, poverty takes the form of a slow, chronic contest against everlasting odds. This demands every atom of physical and nervous strength, every fraction of intelligence and effort. And the exaction is made from those whose only training has been hard, devastating experience.

In this neighborhood, families are large and wages are small. The size of the family is a definite element in its standard of comfort. Poverty begins not merely at a certain wage but also with a certain number of children.* "We've got eight," said Mrs. Meehan, "and by rights we'd only have two if we was to bring 'em up proper. But," she added, "it's the littlest one that I love the best."

Sometimes where the father is living and at work, he earns enough to keep in cleanliness and health, and with at least the necessary medical care, a family of three or four. But with six to support, an income sufficient for four means the lack of essentials for all, loss of health, and sometimes loss of life. Often the mother is compelled to supplement his earnings by her own. Twenty-nine out of the 46 living mothers were contributing a

* For the relation which the number of children had to applications for relief among these families, see Appendix A, p. 123.

part or the whole of the family income. In 24 of the 55 families the father was dead or incapacitated, and there was no stepfather to take his place as breadwinner.*

The mortality among children on the West Side is shockingly high. A family which had not lost at least one child was indeed rare. Fairly accurate records of the births and deaths of children in 31 out of the 55 families show that the number of births averaged nearly eight, and the deaths about three.† This average death rate for so small a group is not surprising when one considers the birth rate. The more children that are born into such poverty, the greater the likelihood that many of them will die. On our list were families who had two living children and six dead, five living and five dead, five living and six dead, six living and nine dead, seven living and seven dead, one living and six dead. Though practically all these families carried insurance,‡ the amount for which a baby's life is insured would not as a rule be sufficient to pay the expense of burial.

The attitude of our community toward birth or death is disheartening in its helplessness. Either event is accepted as the will of God. The idea of voluntarily limiting the size of the family is almost unknown. Mrs. Reilly, bent, deformed, old at fifty, with five children living and eight dead, would ramble on with her dull and listless story of the sickness and suffering those deaths and births had meant, and the constant crushing poverty they had caused; and would finish with,

* For further data concerning the broken families in the group, and the extent of wage-earning among the mothers, see Appendix A, p. 124 ff.

† See Anthony, Katharine: Mothers Who Must Earn, p. 166 ff. (West Side Studies.) Russell Sage Foundation Publication. New York, Survey Associates, 1914.

‡ See Appendix A, pp. 128-129.

"It's the poor as can't take care of them, to whom they're sent."

The housing of these families was of a grade commensurate with the degree of their poverty. Dark, unventilated rooms were found in the apartments of 30 families, and about half of the group of 55 had less space than was required for health or comfort. As is generally true with families of their class, the amount of rent paid for poor and inadequate accommodations was relatively high.*

In spite of the mountains of difficulty in the way of these mothers, their success in bringing up their children is sometimes great beyond our realization. There was, for instance, one household on a certain block on Eleventh Avenue where the father brought in $12 in return for a full week of unskilled labor. There were four children under working age. Twelve dollars, six persons, city prices—this was the mother's problem, by no means so discouraging as that of some of her neighbors, but still a difficult one. The answer is not to be written on paper. It is on children's faces, in the events and outcome of human lives. However successful the present answer, each day sets the old quandary forth anew. Never solved, it stretches on into the years ahead.

With this family, part of the answer was their presence on Eleventh Avenue. It was in the clangor of the freight trains that passed on the street surface by their door and blackened their windows with smoke. It was in the stench of the slaughter house which the breeze brought into their rooms. It was in the soot of the

* For discussion of housing and rent in the 55 families, see Appendix A, pp. 126-128.

factories and the dangers to child life around the docks. There were outward evidences of family life in the block where they dwelt—dilapidated tenements, with a sordid little grocery store in the middle of the block. A garish little saloon stood on the corner. The houses did not present the solid red brick front of the usual tenement street, with its delusive appearance of respectability. The buildings were irregular; some were low and shack-like. Their windows faced Jersey and the nightly glory of the sunset, but even this could not redeem the sordidness and squalor of the neighborhood.

From these surroundings came two trim little figures. They were school girls, still with all the ways and traits of little girls. Their hair was drawn smoothly into straight black braids. Their eyes were round and wide awake. The neatness of their dress spoke of continual care. They were alert and well-mannered, brimming with interest and comment. In short, they were bright, normal, ordinary children. What this meant as an achievement can only be measured by the obstacles which this one mother had overcome.

She had had the help neither of good fortune nor of training. She had fashioned her product with her own pitiful, clumsy tools. A large-boned, uncouth Irish woman, she still bore the stamp of the soil. Her education had been that of life, a life of hard knocks and rough going. Plain, coarse, with the burr in her speech, bent and weakened physically, she did not present an attractive appearance. But it was her boast that she "never got anything from no society—never knew much about them places—never had to, thank God." Relatives had helped when the hardest pinches came; but

for the most part the family had plodded on alone. But even such parents cannot master poverty. In turn they must pay toll to its resistless strength. For the smallest girl of five was a wan, great-eyed baby whose puckered lips were drawn with pain and on whom the shadow of death already lay. The terms of life cannot be utterly remade.

In one of the sordid tenements wedged into a narrow space as yet unclaimed by business this mother had found a shelter for her brood. Four rooms "through" with a cupboard were rented to her for $9.00 a month and her services as janitress, which were reckoned as worth $3.00. Thus, while her flat would otherwise have cost $12 a month and have absorbed exactly one week of her husband's wages, she saved $3.00 out of the rent to spend on food for her family of six. This was the important fact which had kept them on Eleventh Avenue from year to year, though the mother always hoped that each winter would be her last in the house.

But not all families have the fortitude, the endurance, the power of ceaseless, undiminished effort which this particular group possessed. Even with those who accept the challenge and make the continual effort to keep their heads above water, strength and courage sometimes break. The loss of two days' work for a daughter whose full week's wage amounts to only $4.00 or $5.00 may mean a family tragedy. What elsewhere are incidents, are hazards here.

We have fallen into the habit of looking to the mother as the mainstay of the family. She is held to a rigorous standard which neither husband nor children are required to measure up to. We expect her to counteract

the difficulties and evil influences of her environment by possessing all the known virtues of character. As a matter of fact, the worry and strain of insecurity become too great for many a woman. She grows apathetic, careless, and stolid, or she becomes querulous and neurotic. Perhaps she takes to drink. Drinking is rife on the West Side; it is the easy and familiar escape from worry and discouragement. For the woman who drinks there is scant sympathy or toleration. The decent, hardworking mother has no patience with her. If the victim is putting up any fight at all it is a desperate and a solitary one, for she can expect no help from others. With every lapse, every slipping back from the precarious foothold gained so painfully, she is met by scorn and reproach from her judges with whom the long weeks of effort do not count when once she has failed. To rise many times from the utmost depths of despair and bitterness is not given to human nature, and she ends as an outcast.

I am thinking of one black, terrible half hour with a woman of my acquaintance. A thunder storm darkened all the outer world and almost no light entered the kitchen where we sat. It was one of the two small rear-house rooms that she rented for $8.50 a month. This day it was stifling and unswept, cluttered with little piles of her rubbish. She was going to move; she had been dispossessed. She had lost her job, a position held for three months after a winter when she had hunted work for weeks. For seven years she had kept up a home for her girl and boy, one year during the illness of her husband who drank and beat her, and six years after his death. She had looked forward to the time when Sadie should get her working papers; but the girl

was incompetent and irresponsible and failed to keep any job for long.

This year had brought the mother her first out-of-work experience. In the course of it she had slipped far behind. But with every seven dollars' pay during the past three months she had climbed slowly back. The rent was even. The insurance agent lacked a single dollar. Every night on coming home she had figured slowly and clumsily with the aid of her boy "Petie." She had "built castles, which no one had ought to do." Castles! Dreams of a new suit for herself and Sadie, of whole shoes for Petie which should not be begged from his school; dreams in the future of an "all-through" apartment, even with rugs, and curtains of cheap lace. But again thrown out of work, hope was gone.

She was a woman slow and clumsy of movement, who went through her plodding days quietly and dumbly, with a certain trembling hesitance. But her rusty black clothes were always neat. The housekeeper said, "You c'd tell she was respectable." It was a cherished respectability. She suffered bitter pangs when she saw it fall away. Today her tongue was loosened by drink. She talked quickly, with an unaccustomed rise and fall of speech, and with fluency of gesture. She clung to Petie, possessed with the idea that some one was trying to take him away. "They shall not take me boy. The girl is wild; she has me heart broke. I've worked and I've tried an' it's all come to this. But I won't be parted fr'm me boy." And again and again, the voice rising to a cry, "I've been turned down—turned down I am. I'm not a young woman now an' you know I can't stand it—turned down hard I've been."

Without doubt some women of the dependent classes are strongly braced in their morals by the rigorous standard to which we hold them. The consciousness that nothing but the best of conduct will be excused in them must serve as a constant stimulus to heroic living. But on the other hand, there are doubtless many who have drifted to the bottom as the result of a first lapse which might have been excused and survived under a less rigorous standard. There are too many who share the decent working woman's point of view. "When a woman takes to the can, she ain't got no good left."

Many of our girls came from homes where the parents were heavy and constant drinkers.* They were familiar with the appearance of drunkenness. It does not revolt such girls when it breaks out in a place of amusement. They do not resent it in their boy companions but view it on the whole with unconcern. But they come to be wary of its manifestations in others and even unconsciously expert in inebriate psychology. There was one family where the alcoholic father was always turned over to the fourteen-year-old daughter during his "sprees" to be managed. When he was in this condition she was "the only one who could do anything with him." Surely an ominous ability for a fourteen-year-old daughter!

In a neighborhood like the Middle West Side, poverty is seldom found isolated from its menacing concomitants—ignorance, immorality, drinking, filth, and degradation. Whether as cause or result, these appear as close companions of want. Some of our girls came from

* Of the 55 families, 25 were affected by excessive drinking on the part of one or both parents. Twelve of the mothers were known to drink to excess. For further discussion, see Appendix A, p. 129.

families which hovered constantly on the verge of disruption. The arrogant, decisive power of the law always hung over them like the sword of Damocles, threatening dismemberment.

Here was Annie Brink, who came to her club with Hyde and Jekyll moods. Sometimes she was gentle and tractable. Sometimes she looked out sullenly from a cloud of morbid depression and gloom impossible to pierce. She had grown up in a world of sudden disasters. Almost from babyhood she had been a household drudge. There were seven children in the family and Annie, the eldest daughter, was early pressed into service as general houseworker and nurse for the younger ones. To take proper care of seven young children is too big a job for one woman, and Annie's mother was certainly much too gay and irresponsible by disposition to attempt it. "There was seven of us kids," said Annie, "so I had to help. I wasn't let out on the street much when I was little. One house where we were had a back yard and we'd play there. But then we moved. When we went on to Tenth Avenue there was a fire escape. We'd take pillows out there and sit. It was just grand. Then I always could play on the organ. It was mamma's since she married, but she don't use it any more. It's the same as mine now. It stays locked, because if all seven of us used it there wouldn't be any organ soon."

At nine, Annie was a shy and backward child. Then she lost the sight of one eye by infecting it from an abscessed finger. The new physical defect kept her out of school and the housekeeping was transferred more and more to her young shoulders. She had never had a friend of her own age until at thirteen she attached

herself to a girl of a vigorous personality. Agnes was rough and quick to strike, like a boy, strong and generous. She protected her new friend and took her out to see the world. They went to a school recreation center several blocks north and Agnes saw that Annie was not molested on their way. "We wasn't afraid of anything with Agnes." Then abruptly the strong protector was removed by a yet stronger power. Agnes was "put away." Annie reported, "They won't let her out till she is twenty-one. They're awful strict. It makes us all feel bad."

Such things are accepted happenings in Annie's world. They are the acts of a power quite beyond its influence. Annie took the loss of her champion with philosophy and stayed at home once more. She did not dare go to the recreation center alone. Then came another thunderbolt. Her mother, who had entered upon the familiar way of middle-aged West Side women who lack the stamina that the grim struggle demands, was brought into court, charged with drunkenness, and sentenced to the workhouse. The smaller brothers and sisters were also taken away. Since then life had been one succession of strange women brought in as housekeepers. There were interludes between trials of the various incompetents when the full care fell on the young girl. She was in school only a few hours a day, because her single eye had been weakened. She had grown up on the edge of a volcano. At fourteen she was, by her school record, "peevish and extremely stubborn and difficult to handle."

Such precarious conditions of living are especially unfavorable for the adolescent daughter. The instability of her age is accentuated by the uncertainties

of her life. Foresight and steadiness of purpose are not easily taught when the essentials of existence depend upon chance. The girl sees around her all sorts of makeshifts and haphazard expedients. One of our girls tried to avert a family disaster. Dispossession threatened at the end of the week. Mrs. Derks was in despair, and helplessly she resigned the situation to Emma. With their last $3.00 the girl bought a lamp and some hundreds of printed tickets. The lamp was put in a saloon window. The tickets were to be sold in a raffle which was to pay the rent. They did not sell and the rent went unpaid. "I told her it wouldn't do no good," a neighbor said. "She should a' got a watch."

But as poverty is the enemy of adolescence, adolescence is the adversary of poverty. The vivifying forces of youth are a protection against the depleting effects of want and insecurity. The girl does not take to drink as her mother does. Weeks of want are quickly forgotten in a following period of comfort. When kindliness and cheer once more prevail in her home, consciousness of the lack of ease and loveliness is shaken from her. With the buoyancy of youth she rebounds at the slightest release. But all too often her respite is brief, and when periods of want follow too closely upon each other, her powers of recovery must fail.

CHAPTER III

WHERE THE SCHOOL LAW FAILED

AT five or six years of age, the girl starts to school; between fourteen and sixteen, she leaves school for good and goes to work. The eight or nine years which lie between make up the full period of her formal education. She must acquire during these years of compulsory school attendance all the "learning" which the law of the state fixes as a minimum for its workers.

She has a wide choice of schools. Between Thirty-eighth and Forty-third Streets are the buildings of four different systems. The public schools, the parochial schools, the Children's Aid Society school, and the American Female Guardian Society school are all waiting with open arms to receive her. Often she is simply sent to the nearest school building. To cross the crowded avenues is more or less hazardous for a six-year-old. Or, she is taken by an older child to the school attended by her protector. In this case, it is "Mary's school" that is chosen, and the various systems mentioned have nothing to do with the decision. Sometimes, however, one of them is chosen by the parents because of its particular specialty. The church school teaches "prayers," the "soup" school, as the Children's Aid Society is called in the neighborhood, gives a free lunch and shoes and warm red petticoats. The children

of the poorest poor are likely to go there. The public schools are in general considered best for "learning."

After the original choice has been made, neither parents nor child feel bound to stick to it. A great deal of shifting about takes place, only a small part of which is necessary. Some of the local schools carry their pupils only through the primary classes and must then transfer their small graduates to another building and another street to enter the grammar grades. For many reasons, this single change may be wise, but very often it is only the beginning of a succession of transfers. The break is an occasion to try out two or three new places before settling down. In the meantime, the little wanderer goes through a period of unsettled plans, and incidentally loses considerable time from her lessons.

A free choice of schools and a free use of the transfer are the chief concessions made by the compulsory school law to parental authority. As a matter of fact, it is not always parental authority which transfers little Mamie from school to school, but the child's own flitting, aimless spirit. In the middle of a term, for almost any cause, she is likely to drop out of her class and claim the right to transfer. A quarrel with a schoolmate, a friend in another school, a dispute with the teacher,—these are the sort of trivial reasons which result in sudden transfers.

Our girls had made the most of their transfer privileges. One of them had attended nine different schools on the West Side; another had attended eight; two had attended seven; one had attended six; two had attended five; and four had attended four; 16 had attended three; 21 had attended two; and only eight had continued throughout in the same school. There

were five girls who had come from institutions, and four whose school careers were unknown.

These interruptions mean a serious waste from the girl's meager allowance of time for schooling. She passes at each shift to a new set of teachers who know nothing of her record and tendencies. Frequently she is put back a grade. She resents this, grows discouraged, and perhaps loses interest. Besides, so much ease in changing weakens the school's authority. It is, however, a safeguard against the rigidity of a single autocratic system. It gives some room for experiment with a difficult child, until the régime and the teacher with whom she will fit may be found. A restriction of the transfer would certainly be a blow to the truant officer's method of dealing with girls. At present it constitutes his one suggestion, his only "golden cure."

The girl's schooling begins to suffer as soon as there is any especial need for assistance at home.* Two or three days are dropped repeatedly. Wage-earning sisters cannot stop at home to nurse an invalid or care for younger children while the mother works. When a new baby comes, it is the oldest school girl who carries the extra burden of work. Even the most devoted mothers make these encroachments on the time which belongs to the school. They are driven to it by necessity. "What can I do? There ain't nobody else and I've got to keep Mamie t' help."

When Mrs. Kersey went to the hospital, it was "Baby," the eleven-year-old daughter, who was kept out of school to do the work, and not her older sister

* For data concerning attendance in four schools in the West Side district, and a comparison with attendance in all the public schools, see Appendix B, p. 132.

employed in a factory. "You ought t' 'a' seen how Baby run our house,"—her wage-earning sister was giving the account. "Gee, but she was that strict, *believe me*. I couldn't have a cent o' my money. No shows them days fer mine. She cried if me father didn't give 'er his pay an' she made him, too. She'd give him his quarter fer shavin' money, but not a cent more. An' she bought everythin' an' run things herself. Me mother was away sick fer nine months. Baby, she's an awful good girl."

Emma Larkey, having at last struggled up to Class 5B, had just dropped out of school for good. She was normal in body and mind. She should have been in the graduating class. Why wasn't she? In the first place, she had changed schools eight times since her start, wandering indifferently from public to parochial school and then back again. In the second place, there were five younger children and she was constantly being kept at home. The mother patched grain sacks in order to pay rent for a well lighted apartment of five rooms. "There are nine of us, and if I don't work, we'd have to crowd up an' sleep in those black stuffy bedrooms. I can't bear for the children to do that." Decent living quarters and fresh air for the whole family seemed more important than Emma's schooling. Something must give way under such pressure and so it was Emma who went down. She had braced her young shoulders to tasks more difficult than school lessons and had lost all desire to finish the grammar grades by the time the second girl was old enough to relieve her at home.

The result of so much absence was seen in the great retardation among our girls. Thirteen to fifteen is

regarded as the normal age for graduation,* and by this standard only 10 of our 65 girls were in the normal grade. All the rest were "laggards." There were, for instance, 35 girls who were fourteen years old, the normal age for graduation. Some of them had gone to work, while others were still in school. The grades they had left or were still attending are shown in the following distribution: Two had reached the 3B grade; four, 4A; three, 4B; one, 5A; four, 5B; four, 6A; four, 6B; five, 7A; three, 7B; and four, 8A. One girl had been in an institution. The girls are thus seen to have been distributed almost impartially from the third to the eighth grade. There was for them practically no relation between age and grade.

An occasional girl is defiantly truant. Her refusal to fit into the school system marks a deeper vein of rebellion than in the case of the boy, who more commonly slips the leading strings. Or else it marks an undeveloped body and spirit in dealing with which the usual forcible methods of combating truancy are often ineffectual.

Annie Gibson was a slim, undersized girl of fifteen. Her light, almost colorless hair hung down around small, undeveloped features, strikingly vacant and weak. Her teeth, very small and deeply set, might have been the milk teeth of a well-developed baby. Surrounded by a cover of reticence and a surface of embarrassment, her real thoughts were impossible to discover. She would agree to anything but would seldom volunteer an opinion of her own.

In school she was a passive pupil, never "giving

* Ayres, Leonard P.: Laggards in Our Schools, p. 38. Russell Sage Foundation Publication. New York, Charities Publication Committee, 1909.

trouble" but learning little, and her attendance record was very low. In time she furnished one of the most stubborn cases of truancy in the school and the truant officer was sent after her. He found her at home alone, the girl's mother being away at her regular work as chambermaid in a hotel. As the officer laid his hand on her arm to take her back to school, the child's passivity suddenly broke and she flung herself on the floor, screaming. The man retreated in consternation, fearful that he might be accused of having physically mishandled the child, while Annie was left to recover from her hysterical outbreak as well as she could. This is only one instance of the futility of applying our present method of dealing with truancy to these exceptional cases. This child was primarily in need of careful mental and physical examination and probably of special training which could only be defined after such an examination had been made.

When the difficulty rests with the girl there is no course between threats and a sentence of great severity. The parent may be fined, but then the punishment does not fall on the child. If she is sent away it must be to a reformatory, not to a school. Let us see how these methods would work applied to Christina Cull, another of our girls who was a stubborn truant. At fourteen, she had reached Class 4A. She had not "made her days"; that is, attended school for 130 days during the year prior to her fourteenth birthday. Nor had she gone far enough in her classes to get her working papers. But Christina refused to pass the doorway of a school. She had gone far beyond the influence of the ordinary school.

Five years before, one of the Catholic fathers had found her loitering in the rear of his church. It was

soon after Christmas and he stopped to ask about her holiday. She answered shortly that she had had neither presents nor a good time. His interest in the pathetic, sullen child took him later to her home. The family was squalidly poor. They lived in three dark basement rooms, without comfort or decency. The father, after four years of desertion, had returned home in the final stage of tuberculosis to be cared for until his death.

Christina had grown into a forbidding girl. Her face was so lined and so hard that she looked years older than she was. The childlike effect of her flowing hair and long bangs contrasted oddly with the age and hardness of her features. She might almost have been a middle-aged woman masquerading as a little girl. The truant officer went after her time and again, only to listen to the mother's repeated complaint. Christina was "out from under" her; she went where she listed. Threats were long since outworn and useless. She had heard them from babyhood. "Aw—they talk but they won't do nothin'." Occasionally she would grow frightened and penitent for the moment. But re-enter the ordinary school and sit in the classes with the younger children, she would not.

No course was left but to take the culprit before the superintendent and enter a formal complaint against her. There would then be two plans of action which might be followed: Christina's mother—her father had died in the meantime—might be fined in the magistrate's court or Christina might be committed to a reformatory. To fine the mother of a family already on the verge of dependency was manifestly futile. On the other hand, a reformatory sentence for a girl whose

only offense was that she refused to go to school seemed much too severe. In the face of this dilemma no action at all was taken. Christina, without working papers, without work, was left to employ her illegal holidays in her own way. Her only chance for positive discipline was that she might soon become a serious offender for whom a reformatory sentence might not be too severe. For girls like Christina the only remedy seems to be that they shall grow worse before they can grow better. Such a roundabout and wasteful course might be obviated if we had a truant school for girls, as we already have for boys, especially planned for their needs.

It is a common occurrence for a girl to escape from school at thirteen or fourteen without open defiance of the labor law. Of our 65 girls, at least nine had left school illegally. Their escape was accomplished by petty frauds of various kinds. One girl gave the school a false address; another altered the date on her birth certificate. Two had been absent for illness and had never returned. Others simply "dropped out" and their defection was not followed up by the school, which with its limited number of attendance officers is bound to neglect many such cases. These are some of the usual loopholes by which the girl evades the school law.

The young refugee does not always find it easy to get her working papers at once. The required record of 130 days' attendance during the previous year is a serious stumbling block, although it allows for 70 absences out of a possible 200 attendances. In the public schools she has to reach a 5B grade* and pass an

* In 1913 the requirements were raised so that a child under sixteen must reach a 7A grade before she can take the school examinations. The board of health requirements also have been strengthened.

educational test before the school papers which she must present at the board of health are signed. There the mental test is simpler—a mere proof of ability to read and write. She is tested on two or three primer sentences, such as, "Is my mother in this room?" She is then weighed and measured; and occasionally a child much under average is rejected. Failing in any of the requirements, the girl must wait until she is sixteen, when she may legally go to work without papers. In the meantime she helps at home, or "lives out," or finds an employer who is willing to connive at her lack of working papers.

These are the girls who evade the law. Those who are obedient to its requirements are scarcely less eager to escape. Almost without exception, the girls of our district step eagerly forth from the school at the earliest possible moment. Not a girl of our clubs had stayed in school longer than the law required or long enough to "graduate" from the eighth grade. To continue in school after you can get your working papers is a sign of over-education and is not popular.

In thus leaving school as soon as the law allows, family need very often plays a part. Sometimes the younger girl has begun to lend a hand during vacations. The Donovans tell how "Sissy" got a job at eleven. It was the summer when both parents were ill and out of work. They still chuckle with appreciation of Sissy's enterprise. "You'd ought to ha' seen her. She let down her skirts and done up her hair. She was just a bit o' a thing—not twelve then. She come out one mornin' an' said, 'Ma, I'm goin' to go to work's well as Mame.' We laughed at 'er but she set out. So that day she come back an' sure enough she'd got a job in a

chewin' gum fact'ry, wrappin' packages. There was a graphophone an' at lunch time all the girls danced. Oh, she had a grand time, be-*lieve me*. There was a lot o' little girls whose mothers were poor. When the inspector come, they'd hide Sissy under the table. We most died laughin' when she brought her first week's pay—85 cents! Now, what d'ye think about that? She come in here an' give it t' me as proud 's if it had been dollars instead."

It is not surprising that after a vacation adventure like this Sissy began to lose interest in school. Working in a factory is not all fun, but it brings a measure of independence which the young personality craves beyond all else. It is not always stern need alone which sends the girl out to work at such an early age. Parents may call on her in times of special stress and insist on her returning to school as soon as the pressure is removed. But public opinion among the girls themselves is strong and decided on this point. "I don't mind studyin', but all my friends are goin' t' work, an' I don't want t' stay. My mother an' brothers all holler at me, but I'm kickin' to leave. Graduate? Gee, stay two years? Not for me—it's too slow."

The girl's restlessness demands at this age something very new and vivid. This the school has so far failed to supply. She thinks she may find it in work. And by the time she has discovered that work too grows tedious and monotonous, her greater independence has enabled her to make free use of her evenings for the changes and new experiences she craves.

CHAPTER IV

WAGE-EARNING AND NEW RELATIONS AT HOME

OUR West Side girl sets out some morning, short-skirted, hair in braids, absurdly childish, to find her minute place in the great industrial world. Probably she strolls through the streets, looking for "Girl Wanted" signs. She will try at one of the big factories nearby. Or, if she is fortunate, some friend who is already working there speaks for her. The more enterprising buy the *World* and consult its long columns of advertisements.

The West Side factories take in the majority of the work seekers. A few with especial pretensions to "refinement," or whose families sincerely dread the physical strain and supposedly lower social and moral standards of the factory, go into department stores or become errand girls to milliners or dressmakers. But most of the girls prefer the higher wages of the factory. Lizzie Wade, herself a laundry worker, was perfectly clear in her sixteen-year-old mind as to the advantages of factory work over department store work. "In the first place," she pointed out, "the factory girl gets better pay, and if she hasn't any home, she can always get a family to live with. The girl that works in a store lives in the cheapest boarding houses, and gets soaked for her board just the same."

Few sixteen-year-old workers are as wise as Lizzie. Many of them, no doubt, are vaguely influenced by reasons just as practical in preferring the factory to the store, though they are less able to express them. But if they are asked to justify their preferences, they are likely to return very childish answers. "Tootsie" O'Brien had achieved her working papers at fourteen and a half and was looking for a place. It was significant that Tootsie, who had qualified as a wage-earner, had not yet outgrown her baby name at home. She was willing to take any kind of work, she said, but liked housework best. She wanted to "live out" because her brother was always fighting with her. However, she soon changed her mind, as her sister, who had been a servant before her marriage, told her that she wouldn't be allowed out when at service. She finally went to work in a factory.

Girls of this type do the most unskilled work in the entire scale of factory occupations. They are not equal to the high grade, skilled work of the garment trades and textile industries. An inquiry concerning the occupations of 26 girls showed the following results: One was a trimmer in a necktie factory; three were folding or slip-sheeting in bookbinderies; one was rolling wall paper; one was working in a tin can factory, operating a machine which fixed the bails in lard cans; nine were packers or wrappers in factories producing biscuits, candy, cigarettes, or drugs; three were markers and shakers in steam laundries; eight were errand girls and messengers for milliners or dressmakers.

These occupations are patently without educational value. The factory processes are the sort of light-

weight machine work usually assigned to young girls after the last drop of individual responsibility has been squeezed out. Their chief characteristic is a degree of monotony in which no discipline for the young worker is possible because their effect is stupefaction. The work soon palls on the girl's restless spirit. Martie Sheridan, after five months of this grinding monotony, secretly cut the belt of her machine just to get a day off. Another girl probably, long before the end of five months, would have thrown up her job and tried another, if not several others.

Finding a new place is always something of an adventure, and in the process of shifting she enjoys a few days of freedom. Pauline Stark, throughout her four years of wage-earning, had been a "rover." She had had no trouble in finding new places and had tried so many that she had lost count of the number. "I see a sign up an' I go an' try. Then sometimes I meet some one I know. I stop an' get to talking an' mebbe I won't look any more that day. But it don't take long. Sometimes I throw up a job the first day. I can tell. I take a look around an' see that it ain't for me. Then I work out the day an' don't go back."

It is difficult for the girls to give an accurate account as to where they have worked and the changes they have made. They are hazy as to places and quite unreliable as to the length of stay. With great effort we pieced together the industrial histories of girls who had been employed for some time. Although most of them had been at work less than a year, they had tried a great number of occupations. The 30 wage-earners in our club mustered among them 120 different jobs, an average of four apiece. Two girls of sixteen had

held 12 positions each; one girl of sixteen, 10 positions; and one fifteen-year-old had had nine. One-third of the 30 had had five or more positions. These instances give some idea of the way in which the girl of fourteen and fifteen flits from job to job. It is no wonder that she is inaccurate concerning the details of her industrial experience when each connection is so brief and episodic. A further reason for her haziness is that her point of contact with the great factory and its processes is so slight. Nellie Sherin, aged fourteen, worked in one of the largest and best of the West Side factories. Her childish description of her work is the best indication of her incompetence. "I have to run a machine that pastes the labels. If you don't get the boxes in right the knife breaks and a man comes and hollers at you."

The girl of this class accepts in a matter-of-fact way conditions of work that impress the outsider as very hard. Sometimes she tells of having cried with weariness when she started. But complaints of the long day, the meager reward, and the monotony are few. She has not thought out the general aspects of the factory. Comparisons between individual places are constant, as also are personal grievances, usually against a "cranky forelady." She rebels against the tediousness of her job. "You can hear talkin' all over our room when the forelady goes out. Then we'll hear her comin' in an' it stops short. Soon's she goes, we all start again." As often as not she throws up her job for a personal grievance—a quarrel with another worker, a grudge against a "boss." Fanny Mullens left the Excelsior Laundry because her friend quarreled with the foreman and Fanny's loyalty would not permit her to remain. The

human factor is the strongest with these young workers.

The girl starts in a store at $3.00 or $3.50 a week; in a factory, at $4.00 or $5.00. The 26 wage-earning girls concerning whom information was obtained were receiving sums which varied from $3.00 to $7.50. Of this group, three were earning $3.00 or $3.50; eight were earning $4.00, and eight were earning $5.00. Thus 19 out of 26 were earning $5.00 or less. The remaining seven girls were receiving $6.00 or over; three received $6.00; two, $6.50; and two, $7.50.

One of the girls earning $6.00 had been working five years; another earning the same amount had been working but a few months. Of the two girls earning $7.50, one had been working four years in the same position and the other five months. As far as our little group of girls was concerned, there was no connection between age or experience and wages. Practically all the girls were doing such unskilled work that additional years and additional experience were idle commodities. There was, on the other hand, some divergence between what the different factories of the district were accustomed to pay for the same grade of labor.

Along with her first humble job and her first meager wage, there comes to the young girl her first taste of power. Her first pay envelope is the outward and visible sign of many changes. Her position at home is altered. She has more prestige, the first beginning of authority. Her family may be actually dependent for comfort on what she brings in. This gives to her desires and wishes a new importance. However autocratic her parents' rule may have been, they must now turn to her for assistance. There must follow a certain

loosening of the reins. Every now and again there is a girl who in these early, headstrong years will press her advantage to the full.

To these girls has come the age of self-assertion. The experience is common to adolescence of becoming intensely aware of oneself. With the new intensity of self-consciousness comes the desire to assume control. At this age the girl resents being "bossed." It is the time when many families feel the increased friction between brothers and sisters. Interference and guidance need to be gentle. Because the girl is young she is apt to be extreme and her assertion will often be crass and ill-balanced. These are traits of the adolescent girl of all classes, but this phase among our girls is accentuated sharply by a very definite set of circumstances.

Tradition still upholds her parents' authority. What they ask from her is their right. They are backed by the practical code of morals which, in any community, counts more than many sermons. Public opinion demands the continued subservience of both boy and girl. The precarious state of family wellbeing has instituted a rigid system of household economics; this is needed for mere preservation. It is zealously guarded by the mother, ever the most wary of anything which threatens the group. According to custom she is the spender. All wages come to her untouched; the broken envelope violates the social standard. Husband, sons, and daughters alike are supposed to come under this rule. There should be no exception until the children reach the age of eighteen or nineteen. The mother doles out spending money according to the needs and the earnings of each.

There is no pity felt by her world for the girl who must turn over her meager pay. This is a duty taken for granted. It is the least return for the years during which her parents have made sacrifice and effort for her. The feeling has reason for holding good while economic conditions remain as they are. Each item in the family income is far too important for the girl to escape her toll. She is born to a contest in which she, too, must take part. Only a lucky accident can free her from this inheritance,—accident or rebellion. The pay envelope passes through her hands, and this means the possibility of some independence. At least the choice is hers to give grudgingly or freely. With the responsibilities which come to her so much earlier than to those more sheltered, comes also this earlier power.

Every degree of willingness or resentment in assuming her share of the burden is met with in the various girls. Little wisps and snatches of talk are straws that point to the set of the wind. "Oh, sure, there's a lot o' girls that 'knock down.' You take this week in our place,—we all made good overtime. I know I got two forty-nine. Well, I guess there wasn't a single girl but me that didn't change her envelope, on our floor. Whatever you make is written outside in pencil, you know. That's easy to fix—you have only to rub it out, put on whatever it usually is, and pocket the change. They think I'm a fool. But I wouldn't lie to my mother. She has to work an' she ain't had things none too easy. Some girls are like that. They're only too proud to make so much t' take home."

A common trick is to pretend to the mother that wages are smaller than they actually are. Katie at seventeen was getting $7.50 a week; in six months she

had risen from $5.00. This was unusually good for her set of girls. But her mother believed that she earned only $6.00.

On the other hand, there is the "worrisome" type of girl who surrenders all. Her unselfishness is as extreme as the wilfulness of others. She accepts her hard surroundings, as the others rebel against them, without counting the cost, and sacrifices unsparingly her youthful right to gaiety and pleasure. Mamie Reilly's mother watched with anxious regret the effect of premature care and responsibility on her daughter. Mamie had been working five years since, as a child of thirteen, she first insisted on getting a job. "She's a good girl, Mame is, but y' never seen anything like her. Every pay night reg'lar she'll come in an' sit down at that table. 'Now, Ma,' she'll say like that, 'what *are* you goin' to do? How ever are y' goin' t' make out in th' rent?' 'Land sakes,' I'll say, 'one w'd think this whole house was right there on your shoulders. I'll get along somehow.' But y' can't make her see into that. 'Now, what'll we do, how'll you manage, Ma?' she'll keep askin'. She's too worrisome—that's what I tell her. An' she don't care to go out. Mebbe she'll take a walk, but like's not she'll say, 'What's th' use?' Night after night she jest comes home, eats 'er supper, sits down, mebbe reads a bit, an' then goes t' bed."

Through everything Mamie had done more than her share. At eighteen she was tall and awkward, quiet and shy. Almost alone among these girls, she had never learned to dance. She had none of the frills—bangs, powder, and gewgaws—the cheap frivolities which were the joy of the rest. But she had a dignity and reliability which the other girls respected In the

whirl of excitement beckoning to the girl in New York, she had led a staid, colorless life. She had never "gone out" anywhere because she had never had any clothes. The price she had given had been the very sap of her youth. Her mother said, "She is too quiet-like an' gettin' humdrum at her age. It ain't right as I know."

There is less revolt against these early exactions among the girls than among the boys. In the midst of working hours groups of young fellows may be seen any day of the week idling on the street corners. They are significant of something badly awry in the social machinery here. But the girl who refuses to work is less usual by far. Often the loafer's sister is going each day to her job, turning her money in to the common fund, while he is a parasite who drains the meager supply. Although she probably protests, it is amazing to find how often she tolerates a scheme so unfair. One reason, perhaps, is that a stay-at-home life is too dull to tempt her into idleness there, and to spend time on the streets speedily brands her as "tough." But the chief reason is that she is ruled by the popular conception of duty. Inheritance and custom force her to a conformity which is not required of her brother. Her protest is fainter than his.

But within the home circle she makes her revolt felt. Rarely is a girl "worrisome," like Mamie Reilly; few girls surrender so much. The trail of her way, a way glittering with "good times and fun," carries her often to the other extreme. She follows the lure of her desires with an imperious insistence which does not scruple to shirk the irksome claims of her home. The result is an atmosphere surcharged with wrangling and spite. The girl who as a little child may have been

devoted to her father, now switches away impatiently under his scolding. He, for his part, complains bitterly that she thinks only of dancing and new clothes.

One German father whom we knew, at home with his broken ankle bound in a cast, used his crutch on his fourteen-year-old daughter. "Don't tell me about talkin' to girls—I know how to take care o' them." He brandished his weapon with ire. The home was the scene of quarrels and threats. Amelia was given the worst of reputations by her parents. She "had been a disgrace to them." She stayed out till two in the morning, hung around halls with boys, and had been brought home by a policeman. They had tried keeping her in and putting her under the surveillance of her nine-year-old brother, but no amount of punishment would change her fundamentally. Rancor and hatred had bitten into her soul. She was a strong, tall girl, loud, unkempt, and disorderly. She was more frank than most girls, partly from recklessness. But the bitterness with which she spoke of her parents, the coldness with which she said, "They can have my money if that's what they want," was that of hardened maturity.

The parents often get a settled distrust of a girl with which they do not hesitate to confront her. Distrust is too often justified, for there are few girls who scruple about telling a lie. But constant accusation and doubt serve only to deepen suspicion and drive the girl on to more crafty concealment. The crassness of the punishment administered is especially bad for her years. To this can be traced so much of the "wildness" of the children here. But familiar as she is with brutality of one kind or another, a special resentment comes to the girl at this age. Violence outrages her self-respect

and the ideals which are struggling for a foothold in her imagination.

The greatest strain in such households is that between mother and daughter. The girl is starting her course, undisciplined and eager. The woman has lived through checkered and hazardous years. She has suffered the bearing of many children; she has watched the death of some. What she has attained has been hardly won. Through it all, constant labor has drained her physical strength. She is spent, dragged, and worn, in pitiful need of the younger, more vigorous life at her side. As she turns to it there creeps into her attitude the note of appeal which the girl is too young to appreciate. If she deals a rebuff with the half conscious brutality of youth, her mother may draw back into a shell of hardness. Out of the scant wisdom of her years the child has been forced to a decision pregnant with results for her future; for often upon her response to the older woman's first appeal trembles her entire relationship with her mother and her home.

There is no getting away from the girl's economic value to her family. It seems ugly and crass that a child's contribution to the common purse should have any bearing on the affection or guidance she will receive. Yet it has, and her manner of contributing has even more. Out of the conditions of this engulfing, material struggle, rise the spiritual forces at work in each narrow tenement home. Whatever breeds there of loyalty or bitter estrangement works out its certain effect. And the spirit of the household is of no greater import to any member than to the young, venturesome girl.

Here is a household where the girl's wages have been

the mainstay for the whole winter. Louisa's father, a German, has always been frugal and hardworking and was even penurious in better days. He is now seventy-four. His eyes were weakened in the days of his strength by the strain of his trade as a tailor. Later he came to porter's work, but now he is too feeble for this. The mother, like so many women in the neighborhood, earns the rent as a janitress. Louisa's brother, a young man of twenty-one, is a glass cutter by trade. His work might be steady and his wages good, but the common blight of the West Side has struck him; he chooses to loaf with the gang and take things easy. The old father, inveighing against him, has wished to turn him out. But his mother, although she too takes her turn at upbraiding, shields him against the others and clings to a desperate belief in his transparent excuses.

In this crisis, they have looked to the $5.00 which Louisa brings home every week from the candy factory. She is a wilful little person, frail, underdeveloped, weak of build in character as in physique. The reins have been put into her hands. She has used her new-found power to add to her long day at the factory several nights every week at dance halls where she stays until 1 or 2 o'clock. The reproaches of her parents have no effect. "You say that you like me," she wails, "but you make me miserable here. I'll go out if I want to, and I'll not tell where I am going. Anyhow I don't come home drunk like Bill and make a fuss in the hall. And I work while he hangs around doing nothing."

Leading the Grand March at the racket of the "Harlem Four," Louisa has forgotten her outburst, and the dull, sad, cramped existence at home. She is thin,

pale, sharp-featured, yet with a certain daintiness. Her attire is "flossy" tonight. She cannot boast a ball dress, to be sure. But her scant suit of brown serge with its sateen collar is trim and new. It was bought at an Eighth Avenue store on the instalment plan. Four out of the twelve dollars have been paid down. A great encircling hat of cheap black straw reaches to the middle of her back and bends under the weight of an enormous "willow." It sets off her hair, which has been bleached with peroxide. A long bang hangs to her eyes. Her moment of elation comes as she receives the favor for the ladies who lead, a huge bunch of variegated flowers—roses, carnations, and daffodils. But the costume in which she steps out so triumphantly has cost many bitter moments at home. She has gotten it by force, with the threat of throwing up her job.

The breach is widening between her and the parents to whom she clung as a child. There comes the time when she gets a steady "gentleman friend." She is out now almost nightly. At last the mother appears with her tale, tearful and anxious. "I don't know whatever I'm goin' to do with that girl. I've just beat her, I have—I guess I ruined three dollars' worth o' clothes. But I lost my temper. She stands up and answers me back. An' she's comin' in at 2 o'clock, me not knowin' where she has been. Folks will talk, you know, an' it ain't right fer a girl." So Louisa is losing her only safeguards. Foolish, childish, easily flattered, she is drifting into a maelstrom of gaiety and pleasure from which only chance will bring her out unscathed.

The great issue between the home and the girl is the question as to whether her affections will center there. Only an emotional hold will take effect on this girl.

Her mind is undeveloped. She is not going to reason far. Habit has not yet fastened her in a rut of eternal work and decency. Possibilities that menace health and strength and, in the long run, happiness, hedge her round. If she becomes estranged from those who are naturally near to her, she is set adrift. She is bound to express in some way the chaotic emotional forces within her. She is dangerous then to herself and others, in surroundings like these of the far West Side.

CHAPTER V

THE WILL TO PLAY

A GIRL from fourteen to eighteen is about as unstable and kaleidoscopic as any quantity in nature. She is changing, almost from day to day. It may be that poverty in her home has deprived her of her full share of youth's vigor and supreme physical wellbeing. Even so, she keeps its impatient desire for action and experience. She feels its disdain of restraint and hindrance; its zest for swallowing life in hot, hasty gulps. The desire to play is strong in her. Lack-luster resignation and pessimism are rare among the young even where poverty weighs most heavily. The girl's buoyant spirit breaks loose at the instant of release from factory walls or from the momentary depression of family want. It bubbles forth in girls' laughter and girls' play, and in girls' capricious, whimsical, egoistic moods.

The West Side girl is an independent young person. She has seen a good deal of the world. She has the early sophistication bred of a crowded, close-pressed life. As yet, she has not been battered to the wall in the stress. She has not the pitiful appreciation of the middle-aged woman for slight and passing kindliness. She is self-assertive, arrogant, "able to take care of herself." She comes, asking nothing, at ease and alert, but ready to give a trial to anything thrown in

her way. If it does not suit, she will not be slow to reject it. So she stands, looking bright and curious eyed, straight into the face of her world. She can be defiant at a hint of challenge. And yet one finds that she is suddenly and sharply sensitive. Ridicule and harshness touch her to the quick. Her new-born self-consciousness is easily wounded. A trifling hurt may become a lifelong grievance.

This is a signal of a restlessness beneath the surface which she does not herself understand. It is propelling her onward in an unconscious search. In all her pleasure-loving, drifting adventures she is hunting steadily for the deeper and stronger forces of life. Into her nature are surging for the first time the insistent needs and desires of her womanhood. But this she does not know. She is the daughter of the people, the child of the masses. Athletics, sports, diversions, the higher education, will not be hers to divert this deep craving. She is not close enough to her church for religion to control it. It will stay with her, sweeping her inevitably out of the simplicity of little girlhood into the thousand temptations of her environment, if not, perhaps, into one of the commonest of neighborhood tragedies.

Just now her search is translated very lightly and gaily into the demand for "a good time" and a keen interest in the other sex. She prosecutes it with the imperious heedlessness of her age. Her haphazard and inconsistent training has given her little of the art of self-control. The city bristles with the chances she longs for—"to have fun and see the fellows." What is to come of this depends on the unformed character of the individual girl, the oversight of her family,—some-

times effective and sometimes not,—and, most of all, on chance.

The control of a little money is far more essential to these girls in their search for enjoyment than to girls in another class. There are many doors which a very small coin will open to her. After she goes to work she usually has a little spending money of her own. As a rule she is given, besides lunch money and carfare, a quarter or 50 cents a week. This may go for candy, carfare to dances and parks, or entrance fees to dance halls and moving picture shows. Sometimes she spends the money given her for carfare on other and more pleasurable things, and walks to work, "wearing out shoe leather, which ain't right," as her mother complains. A carfare saved by walking to work is a carfare earned for a trip to a dance hall "away out in the Bronx." Usually a single fare is enough for the whole trip. The "fellow" who "sees you home" will pay for the return. Thus the little West Sider makes her 25 cents carry her as far along the primrose path as possible.

She has no keener longing than her longing for pretty and becoming clothes. Usually she helps in selection, though now and then the mother buys her clothing from the girl's own earnings as autocratically as she buys the rest of the home necessities. Sometimes the girl is allowed to keep a dollar or two out of her pay every week with which she buys her own clothes. Often there comes a period of distress which swallows up her whole wages week after week. She sees her earnings go for rent, for fuel, and for food. Hers is not the time of life to be content with shelter, warmth, and nourishment. She would rather starve for these things than miss

her worshipped pleasures. Mamie Craven, working steadily in the laundry, turning in her money every Saturday night, once broke out one night in a bitter wail, "Oh, Miss Wright, you don't know *how* I want a chinchilla coat."

There are bound to be many lacks in her wardrobe. Usually the greatest one is that of protective clothing. She has no overshoes and no umbrella. When it rains she comes drenched to her club, but will not think of foregoing the evening's pleasure on that account. She goes to work in the same unprotected fashion. Winter clothes are thin and inadequate. Many a girl's vitality is sapped for months in the year through sheer exposure to cold. These deficiencies are endured uncomplainingly. It is much harder if finery or the coveted Easter suit must be foregone. The poorer girl will buy her suit on the instalment plan—$4.00 down and $2.00 each following week. She pays $15 for a suit of the value of $10. She is often guilty, like girls of every class, of some wild bit of extravagance. But in her case extravagance may become heartlessness. A girl whose income was the only regular support of her family spent $5.00—a week's wages—on a willow plume. "We starved fer that hat," her mother said, "just plain starved fer it, so we did."

Social relations between girls of their age and class are very unlike those of boys. A single friend or a little clique takes the place of the gang. They will follow a leader for a moment but not consistently; they are jealous of leadership and slow to acknowledge it. There is almost no natural loyalty to a group. Probably the girl by the time she reaches fourteen has already some special com-

panion. This may be a playmate from her school days, or, very likely, a "pick up" on the street or at work, who soon has the title of "me lady friend." The relationship may extend over years. It is very constant and means that the two share most of their pleasures together. There are distinct requirements; one must "call up" and "wait in" and not "go round" too much with anyone else. But the girl is rare who has a strong feeling of obligation toward appointments or promises. Therefore the friendship is sure to be checkered by quarrels and reunions. There are besides a thousand and one reasons for dispute. The quarrel is taken very seriously, but the chances are that the breach will heal before long. However, this is not always so; no prediction formed on girl nature is sure. The relationship assumes at times some of the formality and ceremony of the gang. In one case, a definite proposal to be "friends" was made by a girl who had quarreled with her former lady friend. The second girl declined, not from any dislike, but because she was already "going with somebody else." When a girl begins to have a "gentleman friend" even the slight ceremony of calling up and waiting in for the girl friend is omitted.

The cliques consist of three or four girls, seldom of more. They are likely to exist among the younger girls who have played together as children. They are seldom formed later on, but incline to resolve themselves into the standard couples.

The girls' homes are not very advantageous places for entertainment and fun. They are too cramped and often too forlorn. Yet everyone here is used to these conditions, and they are not the only difficulties which

stand in the way of visits and hospitality. Visits from gentlemen friends are frowned upon and not desired. The parents, especially of the younger girls, look askance on the boys who come to see them.

"My father was always too strict with us girls," said an older sister, married and established in her own home. "It was always work and keep quiet at home the minute we came in from the factory. He believed that girls must be kept down. He'd have beaten us good if we'd brought a fellow home. So I used to meet my friend at a corner a few blocks off, just the same as my sister Maggie has been doing. It's only a wonder I didn't get into trouble the same as she has done and get put away like her. I'm not the one to turn against her now. When she comes out of the Home, she and her baby can come and live with me."

The sequel of Maggie's story only served to prove the unwisdom of the parental policy which had tried to "keep her down." One day Maggie returned to her sister's home with her six-months-old baby. A week later her sister announced with the utmost gratification and relief that Maggie was married. "If she'd only told us at the start, there'd never been any need for all this trouble. Hannick is a decent fellow and has steady work. He was looking for Maggie all the time she was in the hospital and he was afraid to ask her folks what had become of her. As soon as she came back here, he sent word to me and asked if he could see her. That was the first time I knew who her fellow was. When he came around I told them they ought to go straight off to the priest, and they did."

The street corner has become, with its free and easy etiquette, a substitute for the home. It is very popu-

lar in spite of nagging from the "cop." Still, the policeman is not a very censorious chaperon. Even the older girl whose parents have opened their door to her company has often learned to prefer its lack of supervision. As a place of rendezvous it is greatly preferred to a parlor of one's own where one must be "real lady-like." "You see," one of the girls explained, "my friend comes to my home; then if he wants me to go somewhere to a dance, my mother'll likely hear and won't let me. My brother knows all the places and he'll tell my mother there's likely to be shooting there. He makes it bad for me that way."

The boys' preference for the street corner is quite as strong as the girls'. Their habit is to send a small boy as intermediary to the girl's door to tell her who is waiting in the hall below. An incident at "471" gave the smaller boys a chance to express their sentiment. Their gang, known in the neighborhood as "tough young nuts," were giving a return party to their girl friends. It was to be a "swell" affair, and had involved much consultation and collecting of money beforehand. The instructions had been, "Buy three times as much ice cream as the girls had at their party. Get a cake as big as the cover of this table (a centerpiece 22 inches round). Get three pounds of good candy. Get all the milk and cocoa you want for them girls, but none of that for us. We want soda and ginger ale and celery tonic." These concoctions, not as harmless as their names suggest, had been purchased by the boys. Everything was elaborately ready and the party had begun. All the guests had arrived except the special friends of two of the boys. A club leader's naïve suggestion was that Peter and "Gimp" should call for the

girls at their homes. Gimp leaned forward, astonished, as if uncertain of what he had heard. "Homes," he gasped, in a tone surcharged with dismay. "Gee," the other boy added, "that sure w'd be some place to go, a'right."

Still, the home is by no means to be discounted entirely as a place for recreation. There is too much Irish jollity and good-fellowship in our neighborhood to make it altogether a tame and stupid place. The "house party," as any home gathering is known, is not unusual. Music, dancing, and drinking are the chief features of the entertainment on such occasions. A Thanksgiving party at the McKeevers', for instance, to which the family invited one of the club leaders, showed that the happy good-fellowship which Goldsmith mourned as forever departed from the "Deserted Village" has crossed the ocean with the Irish immigrants and is still preserved to some extent in their newer stronghold on the Middle West Side.

The homelike spirit of the gathering was noticeable. Mrs. McKeever, gray-haired, fifty-two years of age, presided over the festivities. She sat in the only rocking chair, holding in her arms the small son of a neighbor, aged three, extremely dirty and ragged, and as a companion a fox terrier, the pet of the McCormick family. Then came Mrs. O'Hara, the neighbor from the next tenement, large and fat and slovenly, but perfectly good-natured and kindly. She was nursing a small child who was boarded with her by some organization. The child was sleepy and tired and whenever he dozed off was wakened by the music and dancing. In the corner of the sofa next to Mrs. O'Hara was a small, undeveloped specimen of humanity in a faded flannelette

dress and very much broken shoes whose appearance classed her as degenerate. She was also a neighbor and had come in to take part in the Thanksgiving festivities. On the same sofa with her at the other end sat a well made-up Negro minstrel, with feet crossed and a large guitar in his arms, who played and sang as well as many a man in a minstrel show on the stage. Next to him, on a kitchen chair, sat a chap of probably thirty-five years. A crutch stood beside his chair, and upon a closer look one could see that one of his legs had been amputated. He was very dreamily playing an accordion, and had had just enough drink to make him very solemn and uninterested in people and things in general. Mrs. McKeever several times deposited the small child and the fox terrier in the middle of the floor and went over to remonstrate with him for not being willing to take part in the ceremonies. He, however, could not be persuaded and sat perfectly still, only occasionally extracting a glass of beer from under his chair and offering it to the others. Over in the corner next to the man with the accordion was a short, stout boy, probably of seventeen years, in his shirt sleeves, whose chief desire was to dance, but who found it difficult to procure partners.

These were the guests on one side of the room. In front of the large pier glass at the end the chair was occupied by an immense Teddy bear, who occasionally was forced into taking part in the dances and general merrymaking. The next seat was occupied by Delia McKeever. Delia was a remarkably good-looking girl, and on most occasions was neat and tidy, but this evening she was conspicuous because of her untidiness. She had had enough beer to make her unusually mirth-

ful and to make her dance much better than usual. Next to Delia sat Annie, also in most untidy condition. Lizzie, the youngest daughter, was sent for to come in from the street. She was dressed in boy's clothes and had been out masquerading. Holding the center of the floor was a rather handsome chap who played the mandolin well and had a bellowing baritone voice.

The McKeever family were very solicitous that their guests should have a good time, and went around whispering to the musicians, telling them to play or sing whatever the visitors suggested. Everyone sang "The Suwanee River," and the players of the mandolin and accordion sang several of the latest popular songs. Delia and Annie did a fancy dance known as the "Novelty." Delia also danced with the chap in the corner, who was ever busy trying to procure a partner. He was so much shorter than Delia that she could conveniently rest her forehead on his head, which she did during the entire dance, making him act very much as a prop to her wilful, antic steps.

There are two places in which the unoccupied of all ages and types may be seen—the streets and the moving picture shows. Eighth Avenue, the residence street of our aristocracy, is the promenade of the district. No one has better expressed the essential spirit of these promenades than Mr. Wells has done in The New Machiavelli.*

"Unkindly critics, blind to the inner meanings of things, call them, I believe, Monkey's Parades—the

* Wells, Herbert G.: The New Machiavelli. New York, Duffield, 1910.

shop apprentices, the young work girls, the boy clerks, and so forth, stirred by mysterious intimations, spend their first-earned money upon collars and ties, chiffon hats, smart lace collars, walking-sticks, sunshades, or cigarettes, and come valiantly into the vague transfiguring mingling of gas light and evening, to walk up and down, to eye meaningly, even to accost and make friends. It is a queer instinctive revolt from the narrow, limited, friendless homes in which so many find themselves, a going out toward something, romance, if you will, beauty, that has suddenly become a need—a need that hitherto has lain dormant and unsuspected. They promenade. Vulgar!—it is as vulgar as the spirit that calls the moth abroad in the evening and lights the body of the glow-worm in the night."

Here also are the flashing, gaudy, poster-lined entrances of Hickman's and of the Galaxy. These supply the girls with a "craze," the same that sends those with a more liberal allowance to the matinees. Their pictures spread out adventure and melodrama which are soul-satisfying. The vaudeville is even more popular and not so clean.

Sooner or later almost every girl drifts into some club or settlement. She is a wandering spirit, difficult to hold, still more difficult to tie down to any definite program. She wants activity but soon tires of any one form of it. She cannot concentrate, especially on any finely co-ordinated work requiring time and patience. Dancing and music make the strongest appeal to her. A boisterous club room will quiet suddenly to the sound of "Oh! Mr. Dream Man, let me dream some more." The dark-eyed girl at the piano

drawls in shrill nasal mimicry of the vaudeville "artist," copying her air and mannerisms.

Cheap and shoddy—but the scene typifies that groping for the ideal which is universal. Look along the line of faces, stilled and attentive. Something is there neither cheap nor small. Here the face of a youngster is caught an instant from its impish drollery. The hardening lines are soft as with a child's wonder at something beautiful and new. Next to her an older girl is leaning forward. Her features are haggard and drawn, a ghastly white. But she sits with opened lips and a look in her eyes as if she heard beyond the singing something half articulate and far-away. The song has brought a quickening of the imagination, a stirring of childish, unformed aspirations, half gropings for a world finer than the one she knows.

In these girls the longing for the unreal is overlaid by much that is commonplace and sordid. To come upon this sudden, vivid glimpse of it takes away one's breath. At the same instant some of the faces are prophetic of its final dying out. The girls' instinctive idealism, a wild thing here, unnurtured, is as elusive and fleeting as it is beautiful. It is foredoomed to fade swiftly in the midst of unfriendly reality.

Only a fleeting glimpse of the ideal, and soon the club room is again a clamorous, gay, turbulent place. There is much energy that must be let off; nothing but dancing will satisfy the demand. This means that the doors must be opened to "the fellows" too. They, meantime, have been besieging the club from the outside. If the older girl is to be held, some concession must be made to her chief desire. Once it is made, many difficulties arise. The interest between the girls and

boys here is almost wholly one of sex. They are farther apart than in other circles. As children, there has been very little playing in common. The boys' interests are more energetic; group athletics have seldom been opened to the girls of the elementary schools. Both boys and girls have a narrow range of knowledge and impersonal interests. Conversation is a mere exchange of personalities, gossip, and bickering, and there is little even of that. The girls line up on one side of the room; the boys group together on the other side. Games are sidetracked as foolish. There is only dancing to bring them together, and so the club dances. This is doubtless the reason why the dance hall holds the first place in the girl's estimation of a good time. In these places she learns the "tough" dances in their worst forms and with all their suggestive details. If she attends these dubious resorts freely, she is marked socially by it.

Most of the girls under sixteen and the most strictly guarded of the older girls go to dances only occasionally. Then they attend some "racket" given by their special friends, their fathers' association, or their church. They may go with their families or be taken by a boy friend with their parents' knowledge and consent. Perhaps a younger sister is allowed to go along, much below the age when the first daughter started, because "she's company for May." This occasional ball, with its more or less formal invitation, its sanction by the parents, and its semi-chaperonage, is considered a very different thing from the promiscuous attendance of dance halls.

Many of the older girls, as we have seen, go much as they choose, in a free and easy fashion. They are not restricted, or if they are they "sneak" away.

Two girls go together as a rule. They must have a little money—carfare and a quarter for entrance. But that is all that is needed; no chaperon and no escort. Bonds are off; freedom is absolute; the range of possibilities is almost limitless. From Fourteenth Street to 162nd Street, East Side and West, from Coney to Jersey, these eager feet in the path of pleasure find their way. They are not even dependent on the initiative of an escort for their good time. The girls decide on their dance hall, and once on the floor, a "pick-up" is easy to acquire. If they dance together, two men are sure to "break" provided the girls are good looking and dance well. Etiquette demands that they remain through the dance with this random partner. To desert him on the floor is an insult which he may avenge with violence. To sneak between the halves is somewhat risky and is considered mean. It is better, as one of our girls pointed out, to tell him frankly that "you can't seem to keep step and you'd rather not dance it out."

The dance hall, with its air of license, its dark corners and balconies, its tough dancing, and its heavy drinking, is becoming familiar to every reader of the newspapers. To the girls who attend them they are not all of one kind by any means. The best places are perhaps too "classy" for the West Side girl, and she has not the proper clothes. The character of the dances at any hall depends, our informants said, entirely upon the club that manages the affair. "If they don't want nothing but society dancing, why the cop'll keep the floor clear for them. But if some of these tough fellows are running the racket off they go to the cop and say, 'We

don't want any dancing stopped here. See?' and he leaves them alone."* Home-going is not thought of until 1 or 2, often 3 or 4 a. m. The ball is often followed by a trip to a restaurant and home is finally reached at 6 a. m.

* These statements of the girls are corroborated by the following paragraphs from a recent study:

"During the past few years aggressive measures have been taken by different reform organizations aiming to bring about a more wholesome atmosphere in connection with public dances, especially those attended by the poorer boys and girls. Proprietors have been induced to employ special officers to attend the dances and keep order, prevent 'tough' and 'half-time' dancing, and protect innocent girls from the advances of undesirable persons. The duties of the special officer are difficult to perform. If he interferes too much, the dancers go to some other place where they enjoy more freedom. As a result, the honest proprietor who endeavors to conduct a respectable hall loses patronage, while the disreputable owner makes all the profit. Again, the young people who attend these balls know immediately when a person different from themselves appears in the hall. At once the dance becomes modest and sedate, and the visitor goes away to report that 'while conditions are not what they should be, yet on the whole there is great improvement.'

"A social club gave a ball on the evening of March 23, 1912, at a hall in East 2nd Street. The dancing was very suggestive. The special officer was entertaining a police sergeant, but neither made any effort to regulate the actions of the dancers. The next afternoon another club occupied the hall at the same address, with the same special officer in attendance. Suddenly, when the dancing was in full swing, the officer hurriedly rushed among the dancers and told them to 'cut it out' as three detectives had just come in and he did not want to see the place closed up. A girl, apparently thirteen years of age, was dancing at the time and the officer put her off the floor, loudly declaring that the proprietor did not allow young girls to dance in the hall. Things resumed their former aspect, however, as soon as the detectives retired."—Kneeland, George J.: Commercialized Prostitution in New York City, pp. 68–70. Bureau of Social Hygiene. New York, Century Co., 1913.

A party of this kind is not the single carnival of the year. Once a week, if not twice or thrice, the girl who goes to the dance hall goes through its round of excesses. The most startling fact in this connection is that it is the little girls who are doing the dancing in the public places of amusement in New York. The young girl usually settles down to keeping steady company some time before her early marriage, and goes less to the dance halls. Sixteen-year-old Josie, spending three out of every seven nights of the week at public dances, said, "When I'm eighteen or nineteen I won't care about it any more. I'll have a 'friend' then and won't want to go anywheres."

There is another group of girls who do not go to the dance halls. They have not even the small amount of money that would take them there, nor the one suit of good clothes that would make them presentable among the others. Lacking the tawdry finery and the superficial good manners of the other set, they are shabby and dirty and are known throughout the block as tough. Between them and the upper set, those who hover on the edge of toughness and fight for the poor distinction of just escaping it, there is a chasm of dislike, suspicion, and jealousy. The tough girls have the two universal amusement places—the street and the nickel "dump" (moving picture show). Besides these, they can make meeting places of the alleys, the docks, and vacant rooms in the tenements. These neglected, unlit cracks and crannies serve as traps for childhood of both sexes. Here children are snared in the darkness long before they are old enough to know the meaning of temptation. This is the most sinister phase of the recreation problem.

Marriage is for all these girls the final and greatest adventure of adolescence. They do not look past the adventure at the responsibilities which lie beyond. The question of children is waved aside as scarcely worth a hearing. Here, where the management of a household is so hazardous and stern an affair, it is most lightly assumed. The girl steps carelessly and boldly ahead. Sixteen is a bit early, but eighteen or nineteen is a good age and further delay is considered needless.

Sometimes the girl goes to church with her companion and is married in the presence of her family and friends. But very often she and her boy-husband indulge in a mild elopement. This is not necessarily done to evade the objection of parents. It is partly in obedience to the romantic instinct of youth and partly because the girl and her family cannot afford the parade of a real wedding. After one of these secret marriages, it is not uncommon for the girl to go on living at home and working, while her husband does the same. In a short time the fact of their marriage becomes known; the young pair become the center of neighborhood interest; and then, as a decidedly secondary matter, the question of their "taking up rooms" is considered. Probably the new wife goes on working in order to buy furniture for her home.

"What do you think!" exclaimed Mrs. Attinger to a visitor from the club who dropped in on a Saturday morning. "Our Lizzie's married. She's been married two months and they never told me till last week." Mrs. Attinger seemed not at all displeased with the event, viewing it as a successful joke on herself and Lizzie's friends. She went on to relate how her daughter had given up her job at the cigarette factory and

had gone over to live in New Jersey with her husband, who was a day laborer. It also appeared, from her mother's story, that the young couple had not started out under the most favorable auspices. Lizzie had visited Mrs. Attinger the day before with the news that her husband expected to be laid off soon and she was looking for work, as she needed money to furnish her house. Mrs. Attinger related these details without seeming to be particularly disturbed by them.

It was, after all, the familiar story of beginning wives and husbands on the West Side. It indicated that Lizzie had quickly found marriage to be an extremely sobering event. Henceforth she would have new problems to face, problems in which the adolescent hunger for good times would cease to be the dominant element. The will to play was to give place to the incessant struggle for existence which makes up the career of the wife of a casual laborer.

CHAPTER VI

THE BREAKDOWN OF FAMILY PROTECTION

OUR West Side girls were members of a supposedly protected part of the community. Each of them belonged to a family group; if they were not living with their own parents, near relatives had taken them in. Their homes were in a section which possesses a neighborhood life and neighborhood opinions. The population is far more stable than that of the East Side; recent comers are rare. Some of our girls told of how their mothers had gone to school together. One had started in the same school through which her mother had passed. Many families had shifted around within a range of 10 blocks for a generation. The parents of most of them had been here from ten to thirty or forty years. It is, then, not in the absence but in the breakdown of neighborhood and family protection that we must seek the reasons for social, moral, and physical deterioration in these girls.

The character of the community goes far to counterbalance any advantage the girl may gain from living in an environment familiar to herself and to her parents. If she grows up in one of these blocks, she is, from babyhood, in the midst of lawlessness and rumors of lawlessness. They are afloat in the air she breathes, as certain to be inhaled as are the heavy odors from the gas plants and slaughter pens.

Two girls came excitedly into their club with news of an assault which had just taken place down the block. They had loitered to join the curious crowd and to have a look at the victim. They related the details of the event and commented upon them as upon a familiar story.

There was a ripple of excitement, but no surprise. One girl exclaimed, "Things like that are happening on our block all the time."

The block where this girl lived bears the distinction of having sheltered, some forty years ago, the original "Hell's Kitchen" gang.* A junk-covered lot is pointed out as the site of the tumble-down shack where the gang met. The shack has disappeared, while in the rear, facing the street to the north, a mission is now in full swing. Still, tradition upholds the desperate character of the locality and gives it a bad reputation. The police declare, however, that it is no worse than many other parts of the neighborhood. Fifteen of our club girls came from this block. All the toughs who gather there are, of course, identified with the "Gopher Gang." The Gophers were said to have assaulted the housekeeper in 562. She had reported to the police their use of her vacant rooms, and in revenge they had "beaten her up." It was to this same house, which bears a bad reputation, that a physician had been recently called, late in the evening, to attend a baby. The child was in convulsions, the effect of the whiskey with which she had been "doped." After a search through the house, he found only one family sober enough to be trusted with the child.

Authentic stories of violence came to us from time to

* See Cartwright, O. G.: The Middle West Side: Historical Notes. (West Side Studies.) Russell Sage Foundation Publication. In preparation.

time. Many other tales were the product of gossip largely mingled with falsehood. But the brutality of the neighborhood speaks for itself; it is everywhere, in the streets, in the talk, in the minds of old and young. Recklessness and daring are apt to be painted with heightened colors, exaggerated beyond the fact. The child does not discriminate between garbled truth and falsity. In any case, these stories take effect on her. They are poured into her mind and muddy the stream of her imagination. She believes a large amount of what comes to her ears, some of which she sees and knows to be true. The girls who lived in this block, though they were coming and going by night and day, had yet a lively apprehension of its dangers. "When I go home after ten," said Mamie Stertle, "I always get the cop on the corner to see me to my door." Mamie had lived uptown for a few months. Up there, far to the north, she had acquired a friend of a superior type, a chauffeur, who worked steadily and always had money in his pocket. When she came back to live on the West Side, she took it for granted that he could not come to her home, lest he be assaulted and robbed.

The young girl shares in all the gossip of her elders. She takes in greedily the idle talk of the kitchen, the stoop, and the street. In this prurient school she becomes familiar, even as a child, with the lowest forms of vice and immorality. Living on the same block with 15 of our girls were two young women who were the "talk of the parish." "They begun in the dance halls back o' the saloons," said Mrs. Ryan, "and look what they are now!" Not one of our 15 girls but was familiar with the talk and with all the details of the two irregular lives about which it centered.

A restaurant was opened on the corner. It was soon noised about that the woman proprietor was identical with a notorious criminal who had served a sentence of twenty years for infanticide. Before long the girls were repeating with gusto horrible stories of her crimes. Sadie Toohey, standing on the corner with a group of schoolmates, informed them concerning the restaurant keeper, "She was a midwife and used to burn babies." Then, with a toss of her blonde head with its little-girl bows, she added, "She burned one of mine." The sally was greeted with shouts of appreciation and Sadie's reputation as a wit rose among her comrades.

A mother, even one of the wisest, finds it no easy task to defend her young against these influences. Life is far too congested in such quarters for the girl to escape any of its aspects. When a family of from six to eight members lives in three or four rooms it is impossible to segregate the young from their elders. Only well-to-do parents can afford to provide a separate life tempered to the needs of young and growing personalities. The poor man's house has no nursery for its young, no annex like the boarding school, which enlarges the dimensions of the rich man's house and provides a special environment friendly to youth and its needs. The daughter of fourteen in the tenements must share the experience of the mother of fifty, who, even with the best intentions, cannot shield her girl from her own fifty-year-old materialistic morals. What is true of the individual family is also true of mass life on the block. There is no segregation of youth. The result is precocious hardness or youthful rebellion.

If the practice of pooling the moral standards of old and young is not considered ideal training for children

in families whose moral standards meet the usual requirements, it is even less desirable in families which are either degraded or undeveloped. There are here on the West Side many families who have the naïve morality of primitive social groups. The result is that many of the girls are simply reared in a different morality from that of the community at large. Illegitimate births are common. Marriage—even a common law marriage—is accepted as removing any stigma that might attach to an irregular relationship. "Oh, it is all right," said the parents of one girl-mother, "because she's been goin' with Bill now for years. They'll marry as soon as they can."

One of our club girls drifted into a temporary union and then drifted out again in the most matter-of-fact way. After a period of absence from the club, she was reported upon inquiry to be married. "She done well for herself," rumor ran. One day she turned up at the club and brought her boy-husband, apparently a decent, steady sort of chap. Soon we learned that they had not really been married but had started the report in a spirit of fun. However, they now decided to go through the ceremony in earnest and together they went to the priest. Here they met an unexpected obstacle, for their visit had been forestalled by Mattie's mother, who did not approve of Cleary for a son-in-law and had charged the priest not to marry them. The girl returned home, but continued to meet Cleary on the street and to go around with him. Then gradually she began to shake off the connection, breaking promises to the boy and failing to keep appointments with him. He came to the club one evening expecting to find her there according to her promise.

But Mattie did not come to the club that night, and Cleary, after waiting a while in vain, departed saying darkly, "That's the third time this week she's give me the hang-up." There was evidence that Mattie's mother was more concerned about the loss of her daughter's earnings than about making her an "honest" girl.

The toleration of moral irregularities is mingled with much harshness of censure. "D' ye know Jennie Meehan that lives in th' house next to ours?" Kitty Stevens asks the cooking class. "Well, she's just had a baby. Father McGratty went there today an' he married her an' the feller. Her sister was just th' same way, only she went and had her baby in Jersey. Me mother says if she had that kind of girl she'd burn her, she w'd. Burnin' w'd be good enough for the likes o' her." But in spite of this severity of comment, the occurrence is accepted philosophically by the elders of the neighborhood, and soon forgotten.

Some families fall below all moral codes, even the simple ethics of the far West Side. The fault which may be forgiven in the girl is not so pardonable in her parents. Open and excessive infidelity on the part of the father and drink or infidelity on the part of the mother may make the family outcasts from among the merely poor. The daughter shares the degradation of the others and can scarcely escape the consequences. Even where the habits of her elders are not the subject of gossip, she herself cannot escape the knowledge and the influence. There was fifteen-year-old Addie Mercer, bright, vivacious, with sparkling dark eyes, who was getting a "bad name." The unsavory example came from her father.

He, as Addie and her mother and all the children knew, maintained a second household with a colored woman in charge. The effects of this constant example, as well as of other demoralizing influences, were already evident in Addie, and the final result threatened to be total moral collapse.

Often the mere physical conditions of life seem enough to account for the moral tragedies. The hallways of these tenements are perennially dark by day, although they are lit by flickering gas jets in the evening. The legal requirements for illumination of dark halls and stairs are too often evaded throughout the tenements. There was one house in our neighborhood where no lights burned in any of the halls day or night, for months. It is not uncommon to find a hall so pitch-dark that one must feel one's way down the stairs.

A white flower was sent to the sick mother of one of our girls. When a visitor called, it was literally the only thing that could be seen in the woman's room. All other details—walls, bed clothing, the features of the sick woman—were lost in blackness until the eyes of the visitor became sufficiently accustomed to the darkness to distinguish between them. Men boarders shared from time to time the three rooms of this home. In this flat and others like it a daughter had lived her fourteen years. Then, still a child, she became a mother.

Childhood in the tenements cannot escape the smirch of its brutal and ugly surroundings. The open toilet where little children play has given occasion to the bitterest of tragedies. The corner saloon, without which no block is complete, is always, it must be remembered, a part of some tenement house. It im-

pinges on the homes of 12 or 15 families. The halls reek with the odor of bad whiskey. Snatches of saloon talk and saloon laughter leak through the walls, even by day. Out of homes like this come girls and boys to go to schools from whose neighborhood all liquor selling is legally banished to a distance of at least 200 yards! Truly, our legal protection of childhood is in some respects a farce.

Allowing for great deficiencies, we have still much natural vigor and strength among the young in the district. This is not yet a spot such as some that exist in the London slums, pervaded with the taint of innate mental and physical degeneration. The parents of our girls were mainly Irish immigrants or first generation Irish-Americans. They came of vigorous peasant stock, and from a country which is, by comparison with the rest of Europe, almost free from venereal disease. We found that most of our club girls had a fair physical inheritance. Of a group of 20 who were given physical examinations, 18 were shown to have well-developed muscles and organs. Notwithstanding many signs of weariness and disease, they were not lacking in stamina. All the more for this reason should the girl in her adolescent years live under a régime which will conserve her natural energy. The chance for health and strength should not be thrown away. These are the years of nervous instability in which especially she needs rest, change, exercise, and the healthful freedom of outdoor play and occupation. Her chances for all these things are very limited. Bodies intended to be vigorous are hard used from the start, and during adolescence they are often strained and harried far beyond their recuperative power.

Almost every night some girl came dragging in with heavy eyes and cheeks dead white under the powder. There were complaints galore of weariness and headache. One great reason was the immoderate pace at which the lives of such girls are hurried on. Long hours of work are thrust upon them Long hours of play are seized with petulant insistence. To wrap packages from 7 a. m. until 5:30 p. m. within the walls of a factory; then several times a week to dance until 2 or 3 a. m. in the stifling closeness, the noise and excitement of a public hall, is a not unusual program. The immature body is bound to fail. With the girl who keeps up her train of pleasures, only a rebellious season now and then, when she loafs and sleeps long mornings, saves her from exhaustion.

Another cause of discomfort and pain, often with serious results, is the prevalence of minor defects of body. They have gone without care for months and years. Practically no girl has had teeth, eyes, and throat kept in good condition. The group of 20 girls were examined for defect in scalp, nose, ears, throat, teeth, eyes, heart, and lungs. Not one examined was without defect. Of the 20, 15 had enlarged tonsils and five had adenoids; 12 had defective teeth; four defective vision; two were cross-eyed; three had spinal curvature; one had trachoma; and one conjunctivitis.

Two sisters brought trachoma to the house from an institution where they had been reared. Sarah had been cured by a delicate and skilful operation. Martha had been discharged without any treatment. She was one of the toughest girls in the club and least concerned about herself or her appearance. When she

came to us she was "bumming," without a job. In her torn and filthy clothing, with reddened eyes half closed with the disease, she looked the most forlorn and neglected of the underworld. For weeks we worked to induce her mother to give her care. "Thank God, there's nothing much the matter with her eyes," was the mother's final answer after she had been warned that blindness was a certain consequence. And from her sister, Sarah's eyes were re-infected. A case recorded in the group of 20 was also contracted from her.

These examinations were little guide to the most serious physical defects among the girls. Those most in need of care were most difficult and wayward about examination. The mention of a doctor dismayed them. Some who promised to go never reached his office. But a weekly clinic was continued through the winter. Gradually the girls gained confidence and a number of serious troubles came to light. Three cases of tuberculosis—two incipient—were found. The third, which was taking a headlong course, was checked and ultimately cured by sending the girl daily to a hospital boat. Two girls were finally examined and treated for venereal disease. It was noticeable that girls whose histories and habits left little doubt of sexual abuse were under par in general health. Undoubtedly this operated both as cause and as result.

Carrie Fuller drifted into the club irregularly for months. Her voice, her frown, her dragging slouch across the room all told of the absence of any stamina. She never consented to any suggestion of a doctor or of care. It is inevitable that such a condition should make continuous work impossible. She was in a cigar-

ette factory till she "chucked her job." When we saw her after several weeks of absence, we learned without surprise that she had left home to live with a married sister and "lead a sporting life." She laughed a bit recklessly and shambled out, leaving only the wonder that she cared to come at all. Without bodily vitality, how shall any of these children live through the long working days of their youth? And, still more, how shall they resist the continual pressure of the viciousness around them? Yet many a girl is scattering to the wind the strength of her youth.

A group composed of 19 of our girls, ranging in age from thirteen to seventeen, were examined in a psychological clinic. Four girls stood above the normal in mental ability, 10 were normal, and two were barely normal. One was below normal, as the result of immoral habits, and two were feeble-minded.

In the full story, broken schooling, low moral standards, the brutal life of the streets, low housing, and physical inferiority all play their part in the coarsened moral outlook of the girls. There is a group demoralized even in childhood by the abuse of their sexual functions. There are some who fall into immorality during the first years of adolescence. For the most part, however, the girls finally slip into the established ways of marriage and family building. From such groups the children of the next generation will be born in the largest proportion. To society, as well as themselves, it matters a great deal whether they have been crippled in mind and body by a wretched and brutal environment.

Such a girl was May Carney, who announced one

day to our consternation that she was going to be married. May was only sixteen and a victim of gonorrhea. She had been, however, perfectly "straight" for a couple of years. At the age of sixteen she looked upon herself as a reformed character. "I used to be pretty tough with the boys," she said. "That's a pretty bad thing for any girl to say of herself, but I'm over it now." The physician had said that it would require three years to cure her thoroughly of her disease and had recommended a slight operation immediately. In view of these facts, we could only feel great concern at the news of her immediate marriage. One of the club leaders sought out her mother to remonstrate against the marriage and also to propose that May should go to the hospital for two weeks.

Mrs. Carney was found at home one evening about 8 o'clock, and adjourned with her visitor to the hall outside for a confidential talk. The public passage, lighted by a flaring gas jet, was surrounded by four closed doors shutting off as many different flats and the crowded domestic life within. In the evening, when Mrs. Carney's family was at home, it was the only spot where she could have a private word with a caller. Her final summing up of her daughter's situation was this: "You see, if May was to go away to the hospital for two weeks, they'd all say she went away to have a baby. You see them two doors," pointing to the forward end of the hall. "The girls in there—both of them—have just been away havin' babies. They didn't have nobody to take care of them, so they had to bring their babies home. Now, if May was to be gone two weeks, ye couldn't make nobody believe she wasn't doin' just the same as them two."

In view of this difficulty it was suggested that the operation might be performed at home. This seemed feasible, and the more serious question of May's marriage was then broached. "Yes, May will be married in September," said Mrs. Carney. "I know, she's not seventeen yet, but it's this way, y' see. She's sickly, she won't never be no good to me,—the two or three dollars she brings home won't hardly keep her,—and she's always wantin' money to spend on herself. What I say is, she'd better get married now. Daley is a good fellow and he's workin' steady. She mightn't have so good a chance again."

It would not be fair to blame Mrs. Carney very harshly for the materialism of this speech and her total lack of consideration for the "steady fellow" whom May was about to marry, and for their possible children. Mrs. Carney's moral outlook was the result of the hard school in which she had been educated. As for her willingness to saddle a hardworking young man with her sickly daughter, this was, after all, only her duty as a "good mother." It would have been hard to make Mrs. Carney see anything wrong in her attitude toward her daughter's marriage. One has to admit that what we expected of her as a matter of course was from her point of view heroic conduct.

In view of the circumstances surrounding these young lives, it is useless to talk of the "fall" of these girls. Many of them have never lived on a sufficiently high moral level to "fall." With them immorality is of a piece with the uncleanliness, physical and mental, in which they have been reared. There was, however, one important distinction which we learned to make between the forms of immorality. There was

the girl who "solicited" and the girl who did not. One may have courage to grapple with mere immorality, but the girl who has been swept into the currents of commercialized vice is at once allied with secret and powerful forces which enable this trade to hold its own. Once during the year we were compelled to stand by helplessly and see a girl of sixteen slip over the brink of prostitution.

Carrie Drake, who drifted into the club one evening with Winnie Hyland, was a tall, white-faced girl, rather gawky and poorly dressed. She wore a shabby suit, a very dirty white waist of cheap embroidery, and a rackety hat which showed the effects of having been repeatedly rained upon. Carrie's devotion to this hat was all the more noticeable because the other girls seldom wore any. We soon discovered the reason; an attack of typhoid fever had left her almost bald. Beneath the hat she wore a reddish-brown wig which was so thin that it scarcely covered her new growth of stubby hair of altogether a different shade of brown. She said she had made the wig of "some puffs," and that it had been very good until some girl had tried to improve it by cutting it. She possessed a low voice and a courteous manner which she had kept as salvage from the wreck of her mother's training.

Winnie Hyland, who brought her to us, was an irresistible little crippled girl whose faith in the powers of a social worker was the result of having been gently cared for all her life by representatives of one social agency or another. The tubercular hip-bone which she had developed in early childhood had saved her from the worst of the harshness and want which prevailed in her own home. Discovering her friend in search of a

job she brought her over to the club to one of the "teachers."

Carrie was not a hopeful candidate for work. She was only fifteen, still gaunt from the ravages of typhoid, grotesque in appearance. Her mother had died when she was eleven, and she had been promptly taken from school, which she hated, to do the housework. To appease the truant officer, she was sent to another school for a month. Then quietly she dropped out altogether. An attempt at work in a factory at this age was unsuccessful. "My aunt told the forelady how I was poor and hadn't any mother. So she took pity on me and let me try." But she was soon discharged and was kept at home to take care of her younger brother and sister, until all three were sent to an institution. Two months later the father died,—as Carrie declared and certainly believed, "of a broken heart."

After leaving the institution at fourteen, she had lived with her aunts by spells, quarreling and breaking away from time to time. For a while she had stayed with the mother of a friend who found her sitting on the steps in the rain. She tried places at service, but she was not a trained houseworker and did not stay long at any place. Finally she had got a job in a steam laundry, but while working there she sickened with typhoid and was sent to the hospital. When she came to us she was living with an aunt in a furnished room house, a forlorn, three-story shack on one of the river blocks. The halls reeked with odors from the corner saloon. The aunt, her husband, and two children were occupying a single room when they took the girl in. There was only one bed. "I told Carrie she could

squeeze in," she explained. "I couldn't ask her to sleep on the floor."

It was slow business finding work for Carrie. She had to have better clothes. She had to be examined by a physician, for there were signs of a venereal disease which would have made her dangerous to fellow-workers in a factory. These things had been arranged for and consented to. But before they could be put into effect and work could be found, Carrie had taken the plunge. She disappeared without leaving a trace, but soon after one of the girls reported seeing her on Eighth Avenue, "in a real wig and a swell new suit." Immorality was not new to Carrie, but she had found a way to make it pay. She was "on the streets." There followed an unsuccessful search, inquiries at police headquarters, of prison officials, of probation officers. We enlisted the aid of a strong society, but the agent, though he promised to help, gave us very little encouragement, saying that such a search was pretty hopeless, as there were hundreds of girls in similar circumstances at large in New York.

Carrie slipped out of sight all the more easily because she had no one "who rightly belonged to her." When a girl disappears from a home presided over by a determined mother, the search which follows is likely to be a desperate one. Mrs. Mullarkey's search for her Fannie was a mixture of folly, shrewdness, and heroism. Fannie, according to her mother, was "the best girl you ever saw" till she came to live on the "Gopher block." There she "got in" with an older girl at the factory and began to be tough. She threw up her job, as did her friend, and the two spent their

time in secret ways. At first the mother knew nothing of Fannie's being out of work because the girl left home regularly mornings and came home promptly to her dinner. But at last the fraud was discovered; there was a scene, with "hollerin' and smashin'," and upon the heels of it Fannie disappeared. Mrs. Mullarkey's fears pointed to a certain house on Eleventh Avenue where a woman lived who had the reputation of harboring girls. Not daring to go there alone, she enlisted the aid of Father Langan, "a rough hollerin' sort of a man that the children was all afraid of." But the woman would not open even to the Father's authoritative knock. Eventually they returned with an officer who broke down the door. But Fannie was not there after all.

Mrs. Mullarkey's two aids, the officer and the priest, could give her no further counsel. But she herself knew of another resource in the person of a young man, about twenty-two years old, a gangster and political scullion, whom she had known from early boyhood. To him she made her appeal for old acquaintance' sake. "For God's sake, Petey," she said, "you are the only one that can get Fannie. Find out where she is." Moved by the appeal and nothing loath to show his power, Petey promised that he would find the girl; only he stipulated that Mrs. Mullarkey must "leave Fannie be" when once she had her. Mrs. Mullarkey agreed and Petey went forth on his quest. In a couple of hours he returned with the culprit and commanded her to tell her mother where she had been. At first she refused; but Petey, once enlisted on the mother's side, was a stern and unyielding ally. He brought out a knife and threatened her, so that the

poor girl was terrified and stammered forth a confession of how she and her friend had been staying together in a furnished room. Mrs. Mullarkey was so outraged by what she heard that she altogether forgot her promise to Petey. After he had gone she summoned an officer and had the girl taken to court. Fannie was locked up in a cell for twenty-four hours "to cool off." When she came up before the judge the following day she was "as brazen as could be, not a tear in her eye." At last, however, she said she wanted to go home, and the judge placed her on probation.

We knew a sorry scrap of a child, five years old, who was already getting her instruction. She was a thin, sharp-featured little creature, uncommunicative, but very watchful out of her clear, bright blue eyes. Her clothing, hands, and face were always unclean. She gave an uncomfortable sense of possessing a great deal of unnatural knowledge for her age. Her home was a kitchen with two windows, and two tiny dark bedrooms, as hopelessly unkempt and dirty as herself. It was the abode of six people and nine cats. Her father was the last of three husbands, all of doubtful legal status. Her mother, who drank heavily on occasion, was unreliable. "Patsy" was the frequent companion of her sister of fifteen. This girl, who had an unusual, vivid, and forceful personality, was alternately sought out by the fellows of the block and censured with their disapproval. She ruled Patsy as an autocrat, petting and punishing her, allowing her to "tag around" and constantly using her as a go-between. There will be no question of a "fall" for Patsy. As she was being taught, so in time she will naturally develop.

With girls from such homes, childhood is the crucial

time. It is not temptation, circumstance, or delusion that gets them into "trouble." It is the faulty moral and mental training which simply expresses itself later in the almost inevitable, natural fashion. A smattering of conventional morality given by the church or by school is of little practical force against the tenor of their lives. "Reform" for such girls does not mean a return to abandoned ideals and desires. This is hard to achieve, but what is required here is still more difficult. It is the graft of new habits and a new outlook. It is the patient training away from the easy ways into the strict new law. Even fourteen or fifteen may be too late an age at which to begin this.

But actual immorality is not the only fruit of the dingy, sordid happenings which compose so large a part of the life of this community. There are girls who grow up in the midst of vicious surroundings with an inward security against harm. They are as trustworthy as the most carefully trained and guarded child—and hardier. For with them there is truth in the familiar boast, "I'm able to take care of myself." But they pay a price for this fortitude. They are not taught, cleanly and rightly, straight from the shoulder. The taint and grime around them reach to their thoughts and feeling, and they suffer in their conceptions of life and of human experience.

We hear a great deal of the precocious development of New York children. It is most noticeable in girls from homes like these. In spite of the essential helplessness of their age, they acquire a surface hardihood which marks them out from normal children. They have grown up to have a settled distrust of life. They have a lurking bitterness which may be unavoidable

in the adult but which ought never to play a part in childhood.

Yet, granting all the untoward conditions and influences which she must face, the problem of our West Side girl is by no means a hopeless one. Watch her as she swings through the streets, lovely through all her tawdriness, fine through all her vulgarity, gentle through all her "toughness." Seeing her thus we cannot but see also her hopeful possibilities, in spite of the sordidness and evil which have encompassed her.

To strengthen the best elements of the home—this is the surest and most fundamental way to help this girl. The dangers for her family are the most deeply rooted menace to her. And here they are manifold. We may safeguard her recreation; we may improve her schooling; we may regulate her working conditions. But we must remember that she is seldom to be regarded entirely as an individual; she is one of a family group, a unit of a community. Unless she drifts to the streets she will probably remain so. And whatever can lighten and beautify the grimy life of the district, or relieve the intense pressure on family comfort, will give her a better chance.

CHAPTER VII

THE ITALIAN GIRL

By Josephine Roche

FROM out the big candy factories of the Middle West Side throngs of workers, one Saturday night, came hurrying into the December darkness. Eagerly they turned their steps toward their tenement homes. Many of them were Italian girls, and very young.

Across the street from Kohlberger's candy factory a child waited, peering anxiously at every group of girls that left the building. "Lucy!" she called out suddenly. Three girls stopped and the child ran up to them crying, "Oh, Lucy, your sister Mary's got twins!" Lucy's shriek of delight was echoed rapturously by her companions; they caught hold of the child and besieged her with questions. Several friends stopped to hear the glad tidings. Then the little group set out up Ninth Avenue for Lucy Colletti's home to see Mary and the new arrivals.

The noise of the elevated trains drowned their voices and the crowds held them back, but they talked happily on. After the first excitement of the news had abated a little, they turned to other matters. "Perhaps your friend will be at your house, Lucy," said one of the girls.

Lucy's happy look faded.

"No, he won't."

"But he's there at the door every night, and he goes up the stairs with you."

"My father's got no use for him, so I told him . . . Well, what's the use, we ain't allowed to do anything," she ended sullenly.

"Why don't you do like Jennie does, and not let them know?" asked the other.

"They'd know. They don't ever let me out at night, not even to go to the club. It's just sit around the house all evening. If you've got a husband, he'll take you out somewhere. Mary got married when she was fifteen and after that she went out all the time. I wisht I was married!"

As they turned from Ninth Avenue west into one of the Forties a girl and a young man approached them. "There's Angelina!" exclaimed Jennie, calling to the girl. Angelina greeted them warmly. She was thin and looked delicate, as though she had just recovered from a severe illness. In answer to the girls' eager questions she said that she was better; that she and Nick were to be married at Christmas and go to live in the Bronx; that she'd get well fast then. She asked in turn about the girls at the factory and said that she missed them.

Angelina was sixteen. Two years before, she had gone into the candy factory. She started at $3.50 a week and after a year got $4.00, packing chocolates in the basement. It was cold there and damp, and in spite of her heavy sweater and two pairs of stockings she had contracted a severe cold which lingered on her lungs. She failed steadily until one day after a bad fit of "coughing blood" she fainted and had to be

taken home. She could not go back, although her mother missed the $4.00 sadly, as her father too was out of work. But when she was able to be up and care for the baby and do her mother's work as janitress, the latter managed to get cleaning jobs and things were easier. This last week her father had got employment. He was washing dishes in a saloon for $9.00 a week. Now it would be possible for Angelina to marry. Her friends shared in her happiness with quick responsiveness, and continued to talk of her marriage to Nick until the nearness of Lucy's house brought them back to the first interesting topic of the evening.

"My, I'm glad I don't have to work tonight!" Lucy exclaimed.

"Yes, but we must work tomorrow!" exclaimed Jennie. "I just hate going on Sunday. Gee! I don't want no candy for a Christmas present!"

Through cold, ill-smelling hallways, the girls trooped up the four flights of narrow stairs to Lucy's home. The gas flame which flickered feebly on each landing revealed the dirty, crumbling walls. It was the social hour of the tenements. Fathers were returning from the day's toil and the children were welcoming them. Mothers were cooking the evening meal, whose various odors mingled in the passage-way with those of bad plumbing, the common toilets, escaping gas, wet plaster, and garbage. Half-dressed babies crept out to the open doors or rolled on the bare, grimy hall floors, peering with curious eyes through the banisters at the new arrivals. The little knots of neighbors gathered about the doorways hailed Lucy with words of rejoicing. A continuous sound of voices

arose, sometimes low and laughing, again, high and excited, but tinged with the varying cadences and the finely shaded meanings with which the Italian language abounds. Accustomed to a life of the greatest intimacy with relatives and neighbors, the Italians will sacrifice any comfort to preserve this condition.

In the Collettis' flat a stream of smiling friends passed in and out congratulating Mary and touching with warm brown fingers the babies' cheeks. Each drank two tiny glasses of crème de menthe to the health of mother and children. Four generations lived in that flat—a family of eleven. Mrs. Colletti was seated near her daughter's bed, nursing her own year-old baby. Mrs. Colletti's mother, who had been a midwife in Italy, tended her daughter and the newborn babies after the manner in which she had cared years ago for the peasant women of Calabria. The Collettis were prosperous; their fruit stand did a good business. All the family helped. Mrs. Colletti spent every morning at the stand, and the children were there after school and at night. They were able to afford a five-room flat and some pretentious furniture. The front room was particularly splendid with its brilliant green-flowered rug, stiff Nottingham curtains, and equally stiff "parlor set." Mary's wedding presents, bright painted vases, imitation cut glass, enormous feather roses, and pink celluloid album, were arranged around the room. Staring likenesses in heavy oil paint of the bride and groom were the crowning glory of the parlor.

Lucy dropped her pay envelope into her mother's lap. Then she and her friends surrounded the sixteen-year-old mother and told her of the day's happenings, of meeting Angelina, and how she was soon to be mar-

ried. Mary was as eager as the others over the idea of a wedding and a dance. Indeed she would be able to go! And she would wear her blue dress, the one she bought when she "stood up" with Flora at her wedding.

Lucy's friends promised as they said goodnight, to explain to the "boss" why she could not come on Sunday morning for extra work. They ran downstairs out into the street, and as they passed the steam laundry on the block, from which came the dull thump of subsiding machinery, a girl came through the iron gateway. She was a short, stocky peasant type, but her shoulders were stooped, her flesh flabby, and she looked far from strong. She shivered as she came out of the hot, steaming workroom into the chill December air. The girls greeted her.

"You wasn't at the club last night, Rose, so we came up to see you," said Jennie.

"No, I never get home till most 9 o'clock on Fridays and on Mondays. It's awful busy at the laundry these days," Rose explained. "I wisht I was back at the factory packing peanut brittle. It's no joke standin' foldin' all day long. My side hurts something fierce; it wakes me up at night." The group walked along arm in arm toward the tenement in which Rose Morelli lived.

"Have you heard from Tony?" Jennie asked as they entered the Morelli flat.

Rose shook her head and glanced at her mother who sat monotonously jigging a dull-looking baby on her lap. At the mention of her son's name she raised her great, heavy eyes and spoke to Rose in Italian. Then she dropped them again and the tears ran quietly down her face. Tony was the oldest of the family, the only

boy, and he had run away to Florida six weeks before. He had been led to do so by another boy—a bad boy. The Morellis always explained that it was not Tony's fault; he was a good boy but he had got tired of working for the butcher. He had written them a postal from Jacksonville saying that he was having a grand time and was stable boy on the race track. But no further word had come. They did not know where he was. But the mother had not given up hope that he would come back, though each day she grew thinner and the heavy marks under her eyes grew darker. She watched on the fire escape each night, peering down the street for Tony's familiar figure. Now, as she wept for him, she drew the baby to her and kissed it passionately.

The baby was not her own. It was a little Jewish foundling she had taken from the "Home" to nurse when her last baby died seven months ago. Four children had died before that when "so leetle." Over the mantelpiece hung a large, shiny photograph of the last baby lying in its casket. The casket had been very expensive, but it had been a great comfort to the mother to put so much money into it, quite unconscious that the living children were paying its heavy price in lowered health and vitality.

The Morellis' three rooms had none of the air of prosperity that characterized the Colletti home. They were bare, and would have been dingy except for the bright bedspread, the gayly colored wall decorations, and advertising calendars, pictures of the royal family, the pope, the saints, and the Holy Virgin. Under this last a candle burned, an offering for Tony's return. In the tiny dark box of a room back of the kitchen a cot

and two chairs served Rose and the two younger girls as sleeping accommodations. A shakedown in the kitchen had been Tony's bed. It was still there, unused. No one else would have thought of sleeping in it. It would have been an acknowledgment that he might not need it again.

As Rose went on talking of their "trouble" to her friends, they responded with quick sympathy. They lamented with the Morellis as sincerely as they had rejoiced with the Colletti family. They felt with Rose as keenly and genuinely as with Mary and Lucy. Sympathy is the keynote of the Italian community. It binds together not only members of the same family but relatives of all degrees, friends, fellow-tenants, speakers of the same dialect, those from the same Latin town. It extends to the little foundling, the tiny boarder, whose frequent presence in the home is such sad evidence of the high infant mortality in the Italian families. The $10 which the foster mother receives from the institution as board money does not prevent her from loving her little nursling with the same passionate abandon with which she loves her own.

Whether a girl comes from the higher income group like the Collettis, whose home runs the whole depth of the house and has circulation of fresh air, or from the group that feels the pressure of bare living in three choking, dark rooms as do the Morellis, she is touched by the same deep influence of family bonds and customs. A tying-up of the individual with the group, an identity of interests with those of one's kin—these are the factors which dominate the lives of the family into which the Italian girl is born and which present a valiant front to the forces of personal independence that meet her in

her American life, at school, in industry, and in recreation.

The claims of the school weigh little against the claims of the family. While she is a little girl in the grades, having difficulty perhaps with her lessons, the disadvantage to her of being "kept out" a few days does not weigh an instant against some temporary family need in which she may be of help. Illness, financial loss, trouble of any kind, not merely in her own home but in that of an aunt or uncle, keep many a young girl out of school if only to lament with the afflicted.

Let us glance into the Belsito kitchen on a winter evening after Adelina Belsito has been absent from school for a week. Over at the school the teacher's register shows that this last week's defection is only the latest of a long series of absences on the part of "Belsito, Adelina." On this particular evening a number of friends are collected in the kitchen; their sympathetic and concerned expressions show that they are discussing some grave and anxious matter. Presently there enters upon the scene the school visitor. Will she not be seated and have a glass of wine and Adelina will tell the long story of the family's misfortunes.

Illness, accident, death, and loss of savings have followed each other in rapid succession, topped now by the burning of a stable and the loss of Mr. Belsito's two draft horses, the sole capital of the family. Angelina tells the story eagerly in great detail, Mrs. Belsito nodding mournfully at times and adding to her daughter's account. The father is absent because he is out looking for more horses. He has borrowed money from a friend who is "rich" and the family is anxiously waiting to know his luck. Presently he comes, the

children running to him and clinging to his legs. No, he has not been able to find horses; all cost too much; there is nothing, nothing to be had. He clasps his head with his hands and sits with it tragically bowed. Fresh commiseration arises from the gathering, and animated suggestions are offered.

Adelina must go to work. That is the consensus of opinion. But upon inquiry, the school visitor learns that Adelina is not yet entitled to working papers, being only in the fourth grade, although nearly fifteen. No, she does not like to go to school; she did like it until a year ago, but lately there has been "so much trouble" that she has been often absent. Of course she has not gone this week! After her father's horses had burned! Adelina lifts surprised, hurt eyes at the question, though she is not able to explain just what aid she has been able to give by staying at home. And they have been sending her cards from the school, the last one demanding that her father come before the principal and explain her absence. Adelina and her family find this very hard and unjust "when there is so much trouble." Besides, the father could not go; he had to look for horses. The father lifts his head and speaks to the girl in Italian. Presently she explains, "My father say he have it in his head what he do for you if you speak to the principal for me."

And through the slight service which the "school lady" later rendered, the Belsitos became her fast friends.

In the Ruletti home down the block there is trouble of another kind. This time it is the mother's grief which the daughter shares. Mrs. Ruletti is a slender, bent little woman in black. She is not over thirty-three but

her deeply lined face looks all of fifty. Just home from work, she snatches up the baby and kisses it passionately, murmuring to it in Italian. She weeps as she talks. Lucrezia Ruletti explains, "They're going to take it back; they wouldn't let her keep it any longer and she feels just like she did when our baby died."

"Take it back?"

"Oh, yes, to the 'Home.' Bennie isn't our real brother; he's a foundling. You see, when the last baby died in the winter my mother took Bennie from the Home and now we all love him and they want to take him back."

Mrs. Ruletti breaks in. "They say to me, 'You have no milk now, bring Bennie back.' But I feed him bread, meat, oh! he can eat soon. I no want him to go; like loosa my own baby."

In the Italian household the daughter of fourteen is expected to bear a full share of the mother's responsibilities. She keeps the house, cooks, washes, dresses and disciplines the children. Laura Tuzzoli, with her old little face and her maternal air, is a not unusual type. Going to call for the first time I paused before the tenement, uncertain as to their floor. A group of dark-eyed children around an ash can nearby watched me curiously. One tiny four-year-old flashed a quick smile of friendliness and a brilliant glance from her black eyes, then edged a little away from her companions. Asked where Laura Tuzzoli lived, she straightened her slight, ragged shoulders and informed me that she was also a "Tuzzoli." She slipped her mite of a hand into mine and led me up the dirty, unsteady stairs to "our house."

There the fourteen-year-old sister was presiding in the mother's absence. She had just begun to bathe the

one-year-old baby, having finished cleaning their three rooms. The windows had been washed as had the gilt-framed, cracked mirror which hung proudly in the space between them. On a shelf beneath a picture of the Virgin stood a clean jelly-glass filled with water on which floated a cork bearing a freshly lighted candle.

Presently little Lizzie Tuzzoli came in from school carrying her books and papers for "home work." Fourteen-year-old Laura put her through a rapid fire of questions about her behavior and whether she had "made up" with a certain Mamie. Lizzie suddenly dived into her bag and produced from it a wonderful pink pencil of the screw variety. Pride of possession shone in her eyes as she displayed it.

"I got it off Lena Perella," she announced. Laura seized the pencil, touched it carefully, then gave Lizzie a sharp look. "Did she *give* it to you?" she demanded.

Lizzie squirmed a little. "Yes. She— I found it and didn't know it belonged to her, and Carrie Bussi said Lena didn't want it anyway, so——"

Laura handed the pencil back with a scorching glance and a dictum whose tone permitted no rejoinder, "You take that back to school tomorrow and give it to Lena, *d'ye hear?*" Then she became the gracious hostess again.

The bond between Zappira Blondi and her mother was of another sort. When Zappira was twelve years old her father had sailed away to America leaving his family in the little village near Naples to wait until he could earn a home for them in the new country. But work was harder to find than he expected. After a year's absence he wrote a letter home filled with discouragement and reporting dreary failure. Zappira,

who was the oldest of the children, shared in her mother's keen disappointment. The two put their heads together and laid a plan whereby they could earn their passage. The mother borrowed a sum of money sufficient to stock a small store in their village. This she and Zappira proceeded to conduct so successfully that at the end of the year the small debt had been repaid and the passage money laid aside. Their venture had been kept a secret from the father, and when they were all ready to make the journey they wrote him the good news and named the date when he should meet them at Ellis Island. Great was the joy of the family at being together, but hard work still lay ahead of these brave women. They took two small rooms in Mott Street, and for a year mother and daughter worked in a factory, eking out a bare living. The girl was now sixteen, old enough to be married, and though the family could ill afford to lose her wages her father did not fail in what he considered his duty. He soon found a husband for her. Although so young, Zappira had, through years of close partnership with her mother, already acquired many of the sober qualities of middle age.

The unity of the Italian family has an economic as well as an emotional basis. Father, mother, and children often form a single industrial unit. "I works for me fader," says the urchin whom you meet on the stairs carrying a pail of coal to a customer. Visit the Sabbio family and you find Mrs. Sabbio presiding at the bar in a small saloon. In response to your question whether her husband owns the saloon, she answers, "Both of us, we work together."

In the dark, damp little coal and ice cellars, the

cluttered tailor and cobbler shops, the grocery and candy stores, at the fruit stands, and in the saloons, all members of the family take a hand and help to bring in the common income. Stroll along Ninth Avenue and you may see sometimes one member of the family "on the job," sometimes another; at busy times, all are there. The mother is almost always on duty, delegating the housekeeping and tending of babies to the daughter at home. But very often the baby is also in evidence, and is unceremoniously dumped from his mother's or sister's arms into a perambulator when attention must be given to a customer.

Similarly, the Italian of this West Side community makes common financial cause with his relatives and friends in business enterprises. He is likely to be in partnership with his father-in-law or one of his numerous brothers or cousins in the ownership of dray-horses, of a candy or notion store, or a stand. Whenever an Italian begins to thrive in any kind of joint business one may at once be assured that his relatives are "in on it." And one may be equally sure that in times of hard luck or slack work the temporary deficit of the family will be met by relatives and friends. This is taken as a matter of course. "In Italy everybody helps everybody else" is the answer you receive if you express surprise. If the head of the household falls ill, the neighbors drop in daily to see how he is, and rarely does one leave without first slipping into the sick man's hand a nickel, a dime, or perhaps a quarter. Not the slightest thought of charity is entailed by the act, either in the giver's mind or the receiver's. It is understood, however, that the act of kindness will be reciprocated when occasion arises.

When the social worker visits such a home and notes that the signs of real want are lacking, in spite of the fact that the sole income is the $4.00 or $5.00 a week which the daughter earns, the suspicion arises that these people must have profited in business before the father's illness and put by more than they will admit. Then the next-door neighbor enters, a coin is dropped quite openly on the bedcover, and the social worker departs with a deeper insight into the ways and character of the Italian. Small wonder that charitable societies of this district have comparatively few Italian families in their charge.* So common is the feeling of loyalty and responsibility among them that it is like the old tribal sense of oneness, an entire merging of the personal in the group interest, and the group's bearing as its own the burden of the individual.

The protection and watchfulness of the family are constantly about the girl. And the family circle from which surveillance proceeds is usually intact unless death has entered it. Only in rare cases is a "broken home" the result of desertion. The Italian does not abandon his wife and family, nor is his relation to his children that of breadwinner only. He shares with the mother the intimate care and close watchfulness over them. It is always "I ask my father" with these young Italian girls, and in spite of the over-strictness which so many of them resent and from which they take refuge in deception, there is between the Italian father and his

* The solidarity of this colony of Italians is not necessarily typical of other colonies in the city, some of which are known to be well represented in the charity organization records of their district. One charitable agency reports, for instance, that in a certain upper East Side district, nearly 90 per cent of the families applying for relief in 1912–13 were Italian; but Italians undoubtedly formed a large percentage of the population.

daughter a close degree of companionship seldom found in Americans of their position. Perhaps this is due to the fact that he is more in touch with American life than the shut-in Italian mother, whose life is almost wholly occupied with child-bearing and child-burying.

The eagerness of most Italian parents for the arrival of a daughter's fourteenth birthday strikes one with no little pathos when one bears in mind how pitifully small is the equipment of the child at that age grown up in so restricted an environment. The girl herself is as eager to go to work as her parents are to have her. She takes it for granted that she should help in the family income. Carlotta gets a job not because she feels the need of self-support as an expression of individuality, of self-dependence, but because she feels so strongly the sense of family obligation. Lucy Colletti turned her weekly wages into the more generous family income as readily and unquestioningly as Rose Morelli gave hers to meet the needs of bare subsistence.

The West Side Carlotta is not a recent immigrant. Her family came through Ellis Island probably as much as ten years ago,* settling first in one of the lower and more congested districts of New York. Later they moved up to this district, attracted by reports of cheaper rents or simply following, as is the Italian way, relatives already there. Her father is probably a naturalized citizen.

Notwithstanding the exotic community in which the

* Among a group of 86 families visited, the length of residence in the district was obtained for 79. Of these, 51 families had lived in the district more than ten years. Eighteen of the 51 had come direct from Italy and 33 had moved here from other parts of the city.

Italian lives and his loyalty to Latin traditions, ten years of New York are bound to leave their mark. This is particularly true of the West Side Italians, so many of whom carry on a petty but independent business. Owning a fruit stand, a coal cellar, or a trucking business is in itself evidence of long residence and some Americanization.* "The Italian with the stand—eh, he is well off—long time here," is a common remark among his compatriots.

Other signs of long residence on the West Side are the changes in names. Not only does "Lucrezia" become "Lucy"; "Dominica," "Minnie"; "Giovannina," "Jennie"; "Fortunata," "Nettie"; "Francesca," "Fannie" and so on, but even the family names sometimes suffer a change. The "Aquinas" become the "Quinns," the "D'Adamos" become the "Adamses." The old names to which still cling some of the grandeur that was Rome are often gladly exchanged for a genuine West Side cognomen.

Perhaps the chief evidence of Americanization, however, appears when the daughter of the family begins wage-earning. For this she goes directly to the factory. She does not join the ranks of the Italian women who form so large a proportion of the out-workers or home workers of New York City. Only those who are familiar with the submissive way in which the Old World Italian women endure industrial exploitation can understand what a stride toward independence the Italian

* While the men in the group visited were found to be engaged in an unusual variety of occupations—laborer, barber, waiter, and 40 others were recorded during a general investigation among Italians in the district—most noticeable was the group of well represented occupations in which the whole family can share.

girl has made by simply working in a factory instead of at home.

A trade-union organizer and a home-work investigator were recently discussing the Italian girl of sixteen. The former had found Italian girls slow to respond to trade organization and was pessimistic about their economic future. "They will not progress, nor can you blame them when you think of the history of their women in Italy." "You forget how far these Italian girls in the factory have already progressed," said the home-work investigator. "The Italian women I know best are doing tenement house work and earning pitifully low wages because they will not leave their homes to work in a factory."

The Italian girl works in the factories nearest home. These on the West Side happen to be principally candy factories and laundries—such as Kohlberger's, where Lucy Colletti worked, and the laundry where Rose Morelli was employed as a folder. Should the factory move she looks for another nearby. Evil lies in strange parts. If the neighboring candy factory overworks its employes, as it usually does during the weeks before Christmas, requiring night work* and Sunday work, the girls and their families regretfully submit to these weeks of exploitation.

But although economic necessity may force Carlotta into the factory, it does not make her otherwise more independent of her family. Her father and mother cling persistently to the old-country custom of close watchfulness over her. Parental surveillance may be relaxed during her hours of work, but it is promptly revived

*A law prohibiting employment of women in factories after 10 p. m became effective July 1, 1913.

when the day's work is over. The streets, the dance hall, even the well chaperoned amusement club are prohibited; nor may she spend her money on dress or choose a "fellow" for herself. Italian girls have acquired to a less degree than American girls the habit of spending.

But of course this system breeds an occasional rebel. There was Filamina Moresco, for instance, whose calm investment of $25 in a pink party dress, a beaver hat, and a willow plume, was reported as little less than the act of a brigand. If she had withheld 20 cents out of her pay envelope from her mother she would probably have been beaten. As it was, she appropriated $25 and her high-handedness was her protection. Jennie Polini's form of rebellion—choosing a "fellow" for herself and "seeing him on the sly"—was not as successful. The other girls regarded her conduct with doubt and disapproval, though they shared all of Jennie's bitter resentment against the stern discipline of her parents from whom she was separated by the old abyss between the generations, widened and deepened by the disparities of the old world and the new. The pleasures which the Italian parents permit their daughter are those which she may enjoy in their company. She shares in the celebration of family events which the church recognizes and dignifies with a ritual; such as a birth, a death, or a wedding, the seasons of Christmas and Easter, the saints' days, and the American holidays. These latter she interprets in her own way. Angelina Costa informed her parents on Lincoln's birthday that the schools were closed because it was an "American saint's day."

The patriarchal festivals of the Italian *contadini* are

reproduced, however sordidly, in the christening parties, the wedding dances, and the burial ceremonies of the West Side. To the daughter of fourteen a wedding party is the summit of bliss. She lives from wedding to wedding, treasuring memories of the last one or preparing for the next, until her own turn comes to be the central figure. One cannot fancy her stealing away to a secret marriage as so many of the West Side daughters are inclined to do. That would be to miss the most glorious day of her life.

The "school lady's" invitation to Angelina Marro's marriage announced that the wedding dance would begin at 5 in the afternoon, immediately after the marriage ceremony. The "West Side Café" had been engaged for the night's celebration. Surely a place with so high-sounding a name must lay claim to considerable pretension! It was with some disillusionment that the "school lady" entered a small doorway and groped her way through a narrow, dingy, and perfectly dark passage toward a tiny slit of light which promised another door in the far distance. Repeated knocks on the panels below this ray finally caused a slipping of bolts. A huge black Italian appeared at the opening. Near him stood a countryman. They were both engaged in getting ready the refreshments, but they welcomed the intruder. On a big, round table stood a large tin washtub filled with water for rewashing the beer mugs after use. Large wooden trays were piled high with a quantity of sandwiches that one could not believe any crowd, however large, could consume. An enormous Italian cheese, plates of Italian cakes, and a number of crates of beer completed the preparation for the feast.

The room may have been 30 by 50 feet; the ceiling was low and the only means of ventilation were two small windows at one end which opened on a court. These were tightly closed, with shades and curtains drawn. Around the walls were benches and chairs. At the end opposite the windows were the piano and chairs for the musicians. The walls were decorated with cheap prints, a large color print of George and Martha Washington being most conspicuous among them. Stretching from the four corners of the ceiling to the gas chandelier in the middle of the room were strings of flags, representing all nations, but most of them were American and Italian.

The bride and groom had not yet arrived, but one of the bridesmaids, Lucy Colletti, came forward and greeted the visitor cordially. The bride was having her picture taken, she explained, but would arrive very soon. The room began to fill up with relatives and friends of the married pair. There was no dressing room. All the wraps were piled together on the top of a high narrow wardrobe. One of the men stood on a chair and threw on top of the fast growing pile the additional coats, hats, and furs.

Guests of all ages, from grandparents to toddling children, continued to arrive in parties. Suddenly the outer door opened and the young bride and groom entered. There were cries of welcome, a burst of hand-clapping, and a general rush for the pair. The dark, frail little bride in her elaborate costume looked like a child playing at "dressing up." The fine net gown and veil, the white slippers and gloves, must have meant months of saving and stern denials of necessities. She was only sixteen, and Nick, who walked beside her

bearing his head like a young prince instead of the young butcher's helper that he was, had barely turned nineteen. One could not but reflect that if he had been living in Gramercy Park instead of on the West Side he might now be receiving his high school diploma instead of assuming the burden and responsibility of a family. And the little bride might be heading the freshman basketball team with years of care-free development ahead of her, instead of facing the imminent trials of child-bearing with the probable addition of factory labor.

The wedded pair made their way down the hall to the chairs placed for them at the end. The fact most striking to the outsider was the total lack of self-consciousness or awkward embarrassment on the part of either, young as they were, at being the center of attention, the object of laughing comments and affectionate raillery from all present.

The bride took her seat behind a table at the end of the room, removed her flowers and put them in a pitcher of water, and having carefully arranged her veil was ready to receive her friends. "Come," said Lucy Colletti, "we must go up to the bride." This ceremony over, we stood back and watched the children scramble wildly for the pennies the men tossed up. Although the musicians were nearly an hour late, no one seemed to mind. The children raced and played and rolled on the freshly waxed floor with fearful results to their clothes.

By the time the music began, the room had grown so crowded that the dancers were confined to a small circle in the center. As the evening passed the air became blue with dust and tobacco smoke, and the physical

discomforts of the place increased to the point of general exhaustion. Yet one could not but take delight in a scene where enjoyment was so evident and so thoroughly sincere. Every guest participated; no one was neglected. Grandmothers were led out for a gay turn by grandsons who cavaliered their little sisters in the next dance. Fathers and daughters, sons and mothers, made light-hearted couples. It was a sight never to be seen at an American gathering, but common enough wherever Italians are assembled for any kind of celebration or enjoyment. In pleasure, as in work, the family rules.

But weddings and family dances do not come very often, and other evenings must be spent in the tenement home under strict guardianship and oversight. Against this strictness of another land are constantly beating all the new, free customs of America. The conflict begins as soon as Carlotta gets her working papers and takes her place in the factory. Inevitably the influences of the new life in which she spends nine hours of the day begin to tell on her. Each morning and each evening, as she covers her head with an old crocheted shawl and walks to and from her factory, she passes the daughters of her Irish and American neighbors in their smart hats, their cheap waists in the latest and smartest style, their tinsel ornaments, and their gay hair-bows. A part of the contents of their pay envelopes goes into the personal expenses of those girls. Nor do they hurry through the streets to their homes after working hours, but linger with a boy companion making "dates" for a "movie" or an "affair."

Slowly but surely their example is beginning to have its effect on the docile little Italian whose life has hither-

to swung like a pendulum back and forth between her labors at the factory and the duties and restraints of home. She begins to long for the same freedom that the other girls enjoy. But freedom does not mean for her what it means for the American girl, trained in a different school from the beginning. She has not the same hard little powers of resistance, nor can she make the same truculent boast of being able to "take care of herself." She is not able to present the same rough and ready front to rowdy good times.

Free and easy as are the manners of her American sisters, they usually draw a line, distinct enough from their own point of view, at "tough" and "fresh." The Italian girl has no idea of where the line is, or whether these bold-appearing girls really have any standards of conduct. *Her* line, the line her people have drawn for her, is placed well in front of the commonest enjoyments of the West Side girl. Once it is broken over by a "lark" with a crowd of boys and girls, then she is, by her own and her people's standards, condemned. Very often, however, she fails to feel the weight of her old friends' disapprobation as heavily as might be expected because she is still accepted by the standards of the new country, *her* country. As long as she does not overstep its particular line, she is safe. But to her the American line of conduct is blurred and indistinct. It is determined by conditions which she does not recognize or understand. The little tragedies and conflicts of this semi-Americanization are familiar enough to those who know the Italian girl of some years' residence.

It is useless to expect that her young, wholesome craving for amusement will continue to be satisfied in the

ways approved by her people. The irresistible lure of America which has already drawn her parents from the ancestral plains of Italy continues still to draw her. She must enter upon her kingdom. But unaccustomed as she is to the newer ways, the Italian daughter must be taught intelligently to meet American conditions and trained in the forms of self-protection which they necessitate. Her parents cannot do this. They have themselves still too much to learn. But the community to which she has come, bringing her all—her health, her strength, her industry, and her children—owes it at least to her to safeguard the innocent joys of her youth.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

ECONOMIC CONDITION OF THE FAMILIES

OUR 65 girls came from 55 different families. Forty-one of these families had at some period in their lives been aided, or investigated, or disciplined by some sort of private philanthropic or protective agency. Of these, all but one had records with some relief agency. In a very few cases the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor and the Charity Organization Society records show that the family received no relief, but only visitation and advice. Usually, however, actual relief was given. Thirty-nine had records in the registration bureau of the Charity Organization Society. Eleven had Charity Organization Society records only; 15 had records with the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor only; one had been helped only by the church. Thirteen had records of relief from or intervention by more than one society; as, the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor and the St. Vincent de Paul Society, or the Charity Organization Society and the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, or again and again both the Charity Organization Society and the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor. One had been under the care of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children and the Board of Health.

Often, of course, families such as these must turn to an agency for help only in time of crisis; and when the crisis is past and the aid they have received has put them on their feet again, they no longer need support. Such, at least, is the ideal of "family rehabilitation." Of a different sort are the cases of chronic, wasting poverty and misfortune, which no charitable aid can ever render self-supporting. These are the poor who are always with us; and it was to this group, we found, that most of our families belonged. In analyzing the relief cases, it seemed to us that where a family had been under the care of an agency for less than two years it could be put in the former group, where relief was given because of emergencies. Of the 40 cases, 10 were in this class. The other 30 had records for two years or more; and of these 30 cases, 17 had records for two years and less than six years, and 13 for six years or more. The average period of intermittent care for the 30 families whose relief records extended over more than two years was nine and a half years. The average is startling enough, but a few cases stand out as more startling than the rest. One family had applied for aid in 1899 and the case had been "closed" and re-opened* at intervals ever since. One record extended from 1892 to 1908, one from 1895 to 1911. One case had been opened and closed eight separate times since 1899.

It must be borne in mind that no figures can be given to show the help these families had received from private sources; clothing from women for whom the mothers

* When a family is found to be no longer in need of relief, the case is technically referred to in the offices of the relief society as "closed." If further relief is needed at a later date, it is "re-opened."

had done day's work or washing, money for rent or doctor's bills from relatives, food from neighbors,—all these things help stave off the dreaded appeal to "charity."

We have tried to analyze the immediate causes of need at the time the family was first referred to the relief society. The first application is the most significant, for after help has been obtained once, it is likely to be sought again. Of our 40 relief cases, one family had been deserted by the chief wage-earner, in five he was dead, and in 34 the wage-earner was living. Very few of the first applications, therefore, were due to the death of the father.

The number of children born to the family, whether living or dead, often determines the extent of its poverty,* and contributes to the necessity for relief. We have estimated, roughly, that three or four living children was the average for these 40 families at the time of the first application. In some cases there was only one child, but in many cases there were six or seven. The records do not tell us how many had been born, nor how many had died, thus adding their quota to the family's share of illness, expense, and sorrow.† In the cases that were opened and closed again and again we find that child after child was born after the family was far below the line of self-support,—six or eight or 10 children born into homes that could support in decency only one or two at most. But "too many children" never appears as the cause of an application for relief in the records of a charitable society.

* See Chapter II, In the Grip of Poverty, p. 19.

† For statement regarding births and deaths of children in 31 families, not all of whom had relief records, see Chapter II, p. 23.

It is true that need is rarely due to any one circumstance. Usually where one kind of misery exists, other kinds are found also.* The most common causes that the records for this group of 40 show were lack of work, casual work, illness, or drink; and these were combined and coupled together in story after story. Taking in each case what seems to have been the chief immediate cause, though we cannot claim that our division is strictly accurate, we found that in five cases the need was due primarily to illness; in three primarily to drink; in 10 the causes were scattering or could not be ascertained; in 22 the distress was due most of all to lack of work. Time and again the entry appears: "The father has been out of work for ten weeks"; or "It is the slack season in the man's trade and he has been unable to get a steady job for three months"; or "The mother has recently been confined and the father has been out of a job for several weeks and there is no food in the house." It is repeated over and over—out of work, out of work, out of work—till we can only wonder that drink and despair do not more inevitably accompany the loss of a job. These were the conditions that brought 40 of our families to the point of seeking relief at various times in their lives.

It would not be fair to judge the usual standing of our group entirely by these records of the families which had sought relief. We have therefore taken a kind of cross section of all the families of our 65 girls to show their earning capacity and general economic status at the date when our acquaintance with them began. Of

* See Devine, Edward T.: Misery and Its Causes. New York, The Macmillan Co., 1909.

these 55 families, only 21 were normal groups. By this we mean that the father and mother were both living, that they were together, and that the father was physically able to be the wage-earner and the mother the housewife. The other 34 were "broken" families. In 15 the father was dead, in six the mother was dead, and in three both father and mother were dead. In one the father had deserted, and in one the mother was in prison. In four of them there was a stepmother or stepfather. In eight families the father was incapacitated, either by old age or illness, so that he was not able to be the chief wage-earner.

In 29 of our 55 families, the mothers were wage-earners.* In nine of these, the father was dead; in six, he was incapacitated; in 14, the mother worked because the father's income was not enough to support the family without her aid. Where the father was dead or disabled the mother's work was more constant and regular than where she worked to supplement the husband's earnings. Of these 29 mothers, 10 went out for "day's work" sometimes only one or two days a week. Ten worked more regularly, washing or scrubbing several days a week, sewing at home, and so on. Thirteen were janitresses of the tenements in which they lived. Payment for this service varies from $3.00 off on a month's rent to the whole rent and $1.00 besides, depending on the size of the house or houses cared for. Four of the janitresses also took in washing or did other work.

It must be remembered that the very presence of these women on our list means that they were mothers of adolescent girls and of families of children averag-

* See Chapter II, p. 22.

ing about five in number. Considering this we realize more clearly the truth of their saying, "It's hard bringin' children up in New York." More than half the mothers of our girls were forced to do other work than that of caring for a good-sized family.

The explanation of this situation is found in the low-paid unskilled work done by the girls' fathers. Of the 40 living fathers and stepfathers, we can give the occupations of 34.

Teamster	14
Machinist	4
Laborer	3
Dock worker	2
Hotel worker	2
Slaughter-house man	2
Railroad flagman	2
Laundry worker	1
Proprietor of trucking business	1
Street cleaner	1
Peddler	1
Janitor	1
Total	34

Very few of these occupations are what can properly be called skilled work, many of them are extremely irregular and casual, and many of them pay less than a living wage.

The housing of these families is such as would be anticipated by those who know them and the facilities the district offers. There are very few new-law tenements in this part of New York, and little good can be said of the best of the old-law houses. Really good housing is practically unknown. For example, but two of our 55 families had bathrooms in their apartments. Many apartments contained small toilet rooms, and other families used toilets in the hall on the same floor.

Some still had only an old-fashioned yard toilet. One house furnished for its tenants a cellar toilet used also by the men who patronized the ground floor saloon adjoining it, and this horrible situation made the children of the house afraid to go to the cellar alone or after dark.

We have housing records for 53 of our 55 families. Thirty of these lived in apartments containing one or more dark rooms, with no windows to the outer air, or to anything more than a tiny air-shaft. Of these 30 families, 10 had one dark room, 18 had two dark rooms, one had three dark rooms, and one had four dark rooms. The number of persons in household and the number of rooms occupied were as shown in the following table:

FIFTY-THREE FAMILIES CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO NUMBER OF PERSONS IN HOUSEHOLD AND NUMBER OF ROOMS OCCUPIED[a]

Persons in household	FAMILIES OCCUPYING					All families
	Two rooms	Three rooms	Four rooms	Five rooms	Six rooms	
Two	1	1	..	..	..	2
Three	1	..	3	..	..	4
Four	..	2	2	..	..	4
Five	1	2	4	1	..	8
Six	..	2	5	2	2	11
Seven	..	5	4	2	..	11
Eight or nine	..	3	2	2	2	9
Ten or eleven	..	..	1	1	..	2
Twelve and less than seventeen	..	..	..	1	1	2
Total	3	15	21	9	5	53

[a] Information is not available as to the number of persons in or number of rooms occupied by two of the 55 households.

In spite of the lack of space, light, and air, and the poor sanitary conveniences, six of the families in apart-

ments, as shown in the following table, paid rentals of $20 or over per month, four paid from $16 to $20, 20 paid from $12 to $16, 17 paid from $8.00 to $12, and only three paid less than $8.00. One family lived in furnished rooms for which they paid $3.50 a week; one family owned the house they lived in; for three we had no records of the amount of rent paid. The distribution of rentals according to number is shown by the following table:

FIFTY FAMILIES CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO NUMBER OF ROOMS OCCUPIED AND MONTHLY RENTAL PAID[a]

Rooms occupied	FAMILIES PAYING MONTHLY RENTAL OF					All families
	Less than $8	$8 and less than $12	$12 and less than $16	$16 and less than $20	$20 and over	
Two	..	2	..	..	..	2
Three	2	8	4	..	..	14
Four	1	7	10	3	1	22
Five	..	..	5	1	2	8
Six	..	..	1	..	2	3
Six and bath	..	..	..	..	1	1
Total	3	17	20	4	6	50

[a] This item was not secured for three of the 55 families; one family owned the house in which they lived, and one lived in furnished rooms, paying $3.50 a week.

Life insurance is almost universal in our district except for families in the most abject poverty. Often every member is insured, the rate varying from 5 cents a week for children to 25 cents or more for adults. One family spent $52 a year for insurance out of a pos-

sible maximum income of $806 for seven persons. Another family of seven spent $2.40 a week out of an income which probably did not average more than $20 a week at the most. The benefit seldom does more than cover the cost of the funeral, and often barely that. The baby may have been insured for $30 and the undertaker's bill is likely to be $40 or $50. One wife received $141 at her husband's death, and the funeral expenses were $155, leaving a debt of $14, the cost of an illness, and a family of children to support. Such a funeral, of course, indicates lack of judgment on the part of the family, but it must be remembered that from time out of mind and in all ranks of society, a fine funeral has meant respect for the dead; and burial in the Potter's Field is still a sign of the lowest economic stage to which a man can fall.

Twenty-five of the 55 families, or nearly half, had been in the past, or were at the time of our investigation, affected by excessive drinking on the part of one or both parents. Of this we were sure, either from records of philanthropic agencies or from our own knowledge. Some of the remaining 30 families had no cases of alcoholism, but concerning others we were unable to get any definite information. To summarize: In 25 families either the father or mother, or both, were subject to excessive drinking; in 13 of these the fathers drank to excess; in four the mothers drank; in eight of the 25 families both the father and the mother drank. "Excessive drinking" does not necessarily mean habitual drunkenness. Such cases are not frequent. On the other hand, it never means merely taking either an occasional or a regular drink, unless this is done to excess. It means at the least drinking of the sort which

makes the mother unable to keep her home together without interference from the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children or makes it impossible for the father to "hold down" a job. In all 25 of these cases, the families had relief records.

To sum up, we have divided our families on a basis of prosperity and poverty as Miss Breckinridge and Miss Abbott have done in their book on The Delinquent Child and the Home.*

Class I represents the very poor, the "submerged tenth,"—the broken family, ill fed, ill clad, ill supported, aided by charity month after month and year after year, sick, wretched, truly poverty stricken. To this class we have judged that 20 of our 55 families, containing 25 of our 65 girls, belonged.

Class II are the poor, those with whom it is a constant struggle to make ends meet, who seldom have comfort but who seldom are on the verge of starvation. In this class we have placed 23 of our families, containing 28 of our girls.

Class III represents the fairly comfortable, those whose chief wage-earner has steady work or in which the children are contributing a fair share of the income; where food is sufficient and overcrowding is not very great. In this class were 11 of our families, with 11 of our girls.

Class IV is the very comfortable group, those who can afford a little more than the minimum of education and of care for their children, and who are never likely to know pressing want. In this class there was one family,

* Breckinridge, Sophonisba P., and Abbott, Edith: The Delinquent Child and the Home. Russell Sage Foundation Publication. New York, Charities Publication Committee, 1912.

containing one of our girls. This child's grandfather was an early district settler, an Irish builder and contractor. When he died he left to the mother three or four tenement houses, in one of which the family were living, while the rents from the others rendered them, according to local standards, positively affluent.

Thus, to separate poverty from prosperity, roughly though it must be, only 12 of the 55 families could be called comfortable. The remaining 43 families were poor, some of them wretchedly poor. This condition, whatever may have been its cause, was the dominating factor in the lives of all but 12 of our 65 girls.

APPENDIX B

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE DATA

TO obtain facts regarding school attendance in the West Side district studied, a special tabulation for four public schools was made in the Bureau of Social Research from schedules obtained for the Committee on School Inquiry of the Board of Estimate and Apportionment of New York City. Public Schools Nos. 17, 32, 51, and 127 were the schools included in the study. The records covered a period of five months, from February 1, 1911, to June 30, 1911, or practically 100 school days. In the following table is shown the relation between the absences of boys and the absences of girls in the four schools mentioned, and the relation between absences in these schools and absences in the entire city.

It will be noted that attendance is poorer for the girls than for the boys. The difference in the average number of days of absence is about 2.6 days, or approximately 2.6 per cent of the term in question.

Attendance is better in the city as a whole than in the four schools in the district. But 63.5 per cent of the children in the schools in the district were absent less than eleven days, as compared with 67.3 per cent of those in the city as a whole. The proportion of children in each of the successive groups representing longer periods of absence is smaller for the city as a whole than for the four schools. A comparison of the

ABSENCES OF PUPILS IN REGULAR CLASSES, IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS NOS. 17, 32, 51 AND 127, AND IN ALL PUBLIC SCHOOLS. NEW YORK CITY, FEBRUARY 1, 1911, TO JUNE 30, 1911

Days of absence	PUPILS IN SCHOOLS NOS. 17, 32, 51 AND 127 [a]						PUPILS IN ALL PUBLIC SCHOOLS [b]	
	Boys		Girls		Total		Number	Per cent
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent		
Less than 11	1,829	67.4	1,173	58.3	3,002	63.5	382,406	67.3
11 and less than 21	447	16.4	408	20.3	855	18.1	97,512	17.1
21 and less than 31	182	6.7	182	9.0	364	7.7	39,391	6.9
31 and less than 41	92	3.4	99	4.9	191	4.0	19,297	3.4
41 and over	166	6.1	151	7.5	317	6.7	30,006	5.3
Total	2,716	100.0	2,013	100.0	4,729	100.0	568,612	100.0
Average number of days absence	11.4		14.0		12.5			

[a] Tabulated from schedules obtained for the Committee on School Inquiry of the Board of Estimate and Apportionment of New York City.

[b] From a report to the Committee on School Inquiry of the Board of Estimate and Apportionment of New York City, on Promotions and Non-promotions, and Part Time, by Frank P. Bachman, Ph.D., p. 64.

column for boys with that for girls shows that the low attendance in the schools studied is due to the relatively low attendance among the girls. While the percentages relating to the boys correspond almost exactly to those relating to all the children of the city, the percentages for the girls indicate a materially lower proportion of attendance.

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